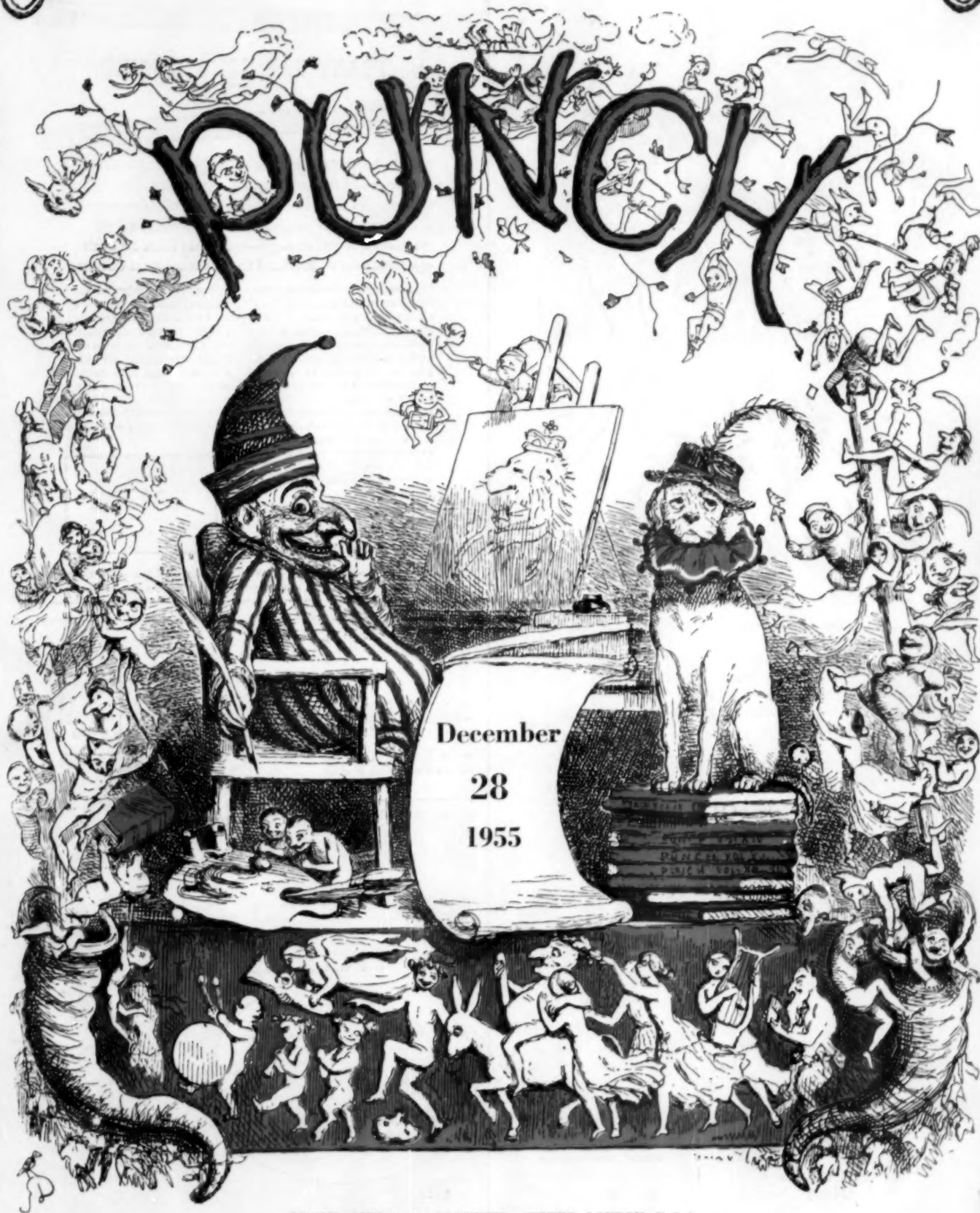


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PUNCH or The London Charivari—December 28 1955

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PUNCH OFFICE 10 BOUVERIE STREET LONDON E.C.4.



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*said somebody or other in pre-history
—and so the first calendar was born*

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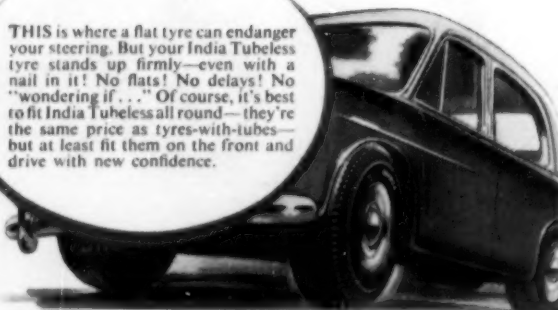
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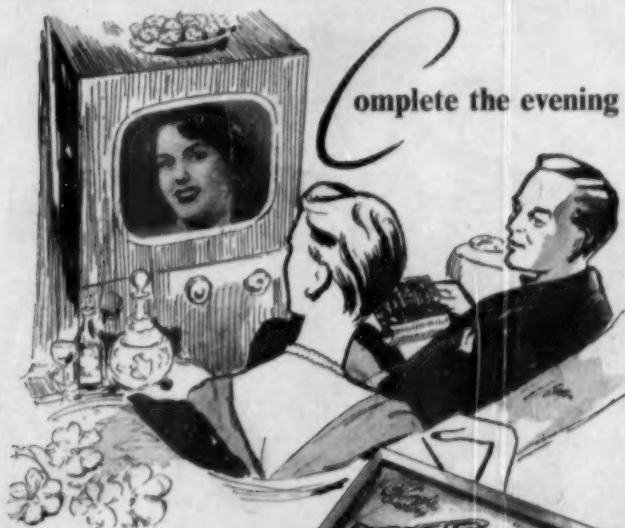


Though distance may keep you temporarily apart you can still remember those Anniversaries, Birthdays, etc., — occasions she holds so dear, with beautiful, fresh untravelling flowers or plants through the magic of Interflora. Over 2,000 leading British florists who display the "Mercury" symbol are at your service and guarantee delivery when and where you wish at home or abroad, within a matter of a few hours if necessary.

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"CRACKNUT"
ASSORTED CHOCOLATES
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...like Kunzle cakes —
a compliment to good taste

C. Kunzle Ltd., Birmingham, England



Brush up your Shakespeare - 1



1 Which of the following wrote Shakespeare?

- (a) Max Bacon?
- (b) Christopher Marlowe?
- (c) Bernard Shaw?

2 'Rise to't good Elbow.' Was Elbow

- (a) A simple constable in *Measure for Measure*?
- (b) A simple device for lifting Flowers Bitter?



3 *Measure for Measure* — an essential character is Froth.

Would you

- (a) corroborate this statement?
- (b) complain to the landlord?

4 Why are we going all Shakespeare in this advertisement?

Because Flowers Bitter is born and brewed in Shakespeare-on-Avon.

Knock back your Flowers BITTER



BREWED BY FLOWERS OF STRATFORD-ON-AVON



See what vitamins can do!

"About a year ago, a friend of mine recommended 'Supavite' to me, and I want you to know how very pleased I am that she did", writes Mrs. E.K. of Morden, Surrey. "I have been taking these ever since, with just an odd week here and there, leaving them off." Mrs. E.K. is a widow with a job that takes her daily to London and back. "I feel sure," she says, "'Supavite' has done me a lot of good, and certainly helped me through the winter months."

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'Supavite' is a most valuable food supplement—so important to health and fitness that it enables the system to overcome, by natural means, many symptoms of ill-health.

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A course of vitamin-reinforcement costs only 4d. a day with

SUPAVITE



VITAMIN CAPSULES

60 CAPSULES (15 days' supply) 5/-
FAMILY PACK (120 capsules) 16/3

NEW

NOW ALSO AVAILABLE

One month's supply (60 capsules) for 9/-

From all chemists

Manufactured by

THE ANGIER CHEMICAL CO. LTD.

A distinguished arrival from France —

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TRADITION

LIQUEUR BRANDY



To everyone who appreciates rare quality, the arrival in this country of TRADITION Liqueur Brandy is important news. So named because it is especially blended by E. Normandin et Cie. to suit the traditional English preference for a pale, dry Cognac, TRADITION owes nothing to artifice. It derives its superb clean flavour wholly and solely from grapes grown at Chateaufort, in the heart of the Cognac region, while its delicate amber colour is its natural inheritance from the cask casks in which the years have mellowed it. Ask your Wine Merchant to tell you more about TRADITION—to be informed about it is to enjoy it all the more.

TRADITION Cognac Liqueur Brandy
Bottles: 57/6 each Half-Bottles: 29/3

FOR A SPLENDID 3-STAR—LOREL

Although TRADITION is not inexpensive, you can with an easy conscience spend on it what you sensibly save on LOREL—an uncommonly excellent pure French Brandy which costs only 37/6 a bottle. Perfect for Brandy-and-sodas.

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BRANDIES OF FRANCE LTD. 13 Maze Pond, London, S.E.1



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"WARMABED"—the world's finest Electric Blanket—provides soothing warmth and comfort to lull you off to sleep! 100% Pure Wool and 100% reliable. In Honeysuckle, Periwinkle Blue, Pink or Willow Green. Double £12.13.0, Single £8.15.2 Junior £4.17.4, all inc. P.T.

Please send for our free illustrated Brochure which contains full information about Warmabed Electric Blankets.

Warmabed

ELECTRIC BLANKETS

MODERN ELECTRICAL INDUSTRIES LIMITED, KNOTTINGLEY, YORKSHIRE.



The skiers stand poised
at the top of a snow-covered slope.

They launch themselves forward at the same instant, but one draws ahead almost immediately,
opening a gap that steadily lengthens . . . 10 . . . 20 . . . 50 yards.

Snow business

The reason for his advantage lies
not in superior skill but in the coating

of milky-white material covering the running surfaces of his skis.

This is 'Fluon', the I.C.I. name for polytetrafluoroethylene — p.t.f.e. for short —
one of the most remarkable plastics materials ever developed.

P.t.f.e. has an extremely 'slippery' surface, to which practically nothing will stick.

On snow, this has the effect of greatly reducing friction, and enables skiers to attain
higher speeds with less effort. This same unusual, but valuable, property has led to the use of 'Fluon'
for some of the bearings used in food-processing machinery
and textile plant, and in other circumstances where normal means of lubrication are difficult.

*Thus, and in a thousand kindred ways, I.C.I.'s research
and production are serving the Nation.*





It is the interest of the commercial world
that wealth should be found everywhere—

EDMUND BURKE 1729-1797

We draw our energy supplies from Yorkshire—and Iraq; our corn from Hampshire—and the Argentine; our timber from Inverness, and the Baltic Coast. Nature has scattered tin, rubber, copper and cotton throughout the world. The continents exchange her riches.

But there is another kind of wealth besides the bounty of Nature — that to be found in men's brains, and in their vision of the future. It is present in every section of the community; without it the deepest mine and richest oil-field would remain geological curiosities. It can transform the poorest raw material into the most useful or important finished product. Its aids are courage and knowledge.

Modern industry forms the framework within which Nature's wealth, and man's, can each work together. In alliance, they provide the material basis for our civilization, and for the human values that spring from it. With each new discovery of wealth, in desert or mountain, or in a man's own head, those foundations are deepened and consolidated.



Esso Petroleum Company, Limited



SENOR BERRES, President of Uruguay, was met on his official visit to New York by the traditional shower of ticker-tape, supplemented by a heavy downfall of seasonable snow. When it turned out that he was there to demand the removal of duty on Uruguayan wool, and to insist that America stop selling cut-price wheat to Brazil, New Yorkers felt that they might have left the reception arrangements entirely to Nature.

Testing to Destruction

AMONG the triumphs of aeronautics in the year now dying has been the development of the helicopter. According to a Government spokesman research on this machine cost £4,000,000 in 1955 as against a mere £2,800,000 in 1954. If progress at this rate can be maintained there seems no reason why it shouldn't be scrapped in 1956.

Sight and Hearing?

It is to be hoped that when independent television transmissions begin from Lichfield the programme planners will make some recognition of the local boy who made good. Dr. Johnson is bound to have said something with a bearing on the television



age. For example: "Life must be filled up, and the man who is not capable of intellectual pleasures must content himself with such as his senses afford."

Nothing Sacred

WHERE is the vaunted chivalry of the British Army? The question is being

asked by those deploring the invasion of a Cypriot monastery by troops searching for arms, who found only a few sticks of dynamite "in a wooden box with a crucifix on the lid"—which they would have got back eventually in any case.

Press War

THE spectacle of Russia's two leading newspapers joined in battle was not one that Western observers ever expected to see; only an issue of high importance could have impelled *Pravda* to sink its fangs into *Izvestia's* leg like that. What began it, in fact, was an *Izvestia*



correspondent's indictment of a *Pravda* article saying that *Izvestia* showed a superficial attitude to maize-growing.

Thin Ice Back

SYMPATHY in the renewed onset of temperature trouble will be extended to sub-editors everywhere: the headline "Hottest 'Cold War' Since Stalin" is only a foretaste of what they will be up against as a result of the latest relapse in East-West relations. The difficulty is, of course, that if War has to go into a headline it can Smoulder, Blaze, Flare Up, or take a choice of a dozen other thermal images. It is different with the War that is Cold: try to convey its intensification by pushing up the mercury a few degrees and you very soon have a thaw on your hands, with readers wading knee-deep in misconception; go the opposite way, and your headline will be shrugged aside as something about one of these Antarctic expeditions. Perhaps the answer is to ban the Cold War from the newspapers;

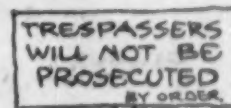
it is stained and old now—like the rusting Iron Curtain. Let the pair of them be pensioned off. This seems to be an opportunity for the Press Council to take a firm line without the slightest risk of offending anybody.

Men of Straw

VIEWERS have become accustomed to the craven attitude of the B.B.C. in its eagerness to apologize, but they had hoped for a manlier attitude from the I.T.A. Instead, when the winner of a "£250 tea service" in a prize competition programme had it valued, found it was worth only £60 and lodged a complaint, Mr. Tommy Trinder grovelled remorsefully. He should have announced stoutly that anyone not satisfied could write to Sir Kenneth Clark.

Naïve

RADAR is now to be used in the Slough road safety experiment, but an official announcement says that speeding



motorists detected by this means "will not be prosecuted," and adds that notices announcing the existence of the radar trap will in themselves "have a deterrent effect." Hardly, however, on those who have read an official announcement saying that speeding motorists detected by this means will not be prosecuted.

Period of Grace

New Year in Israel, remember, Will not begin till next September. What hopes, when these nine months have run, Of wishing them a happy one?

Twelve Months' Hard

By J. B. BOOTHROYD

It has been a crowded year. So much so that many people have already forgotten the suffocation of four hundred monkeys at London Airport, and the reprimand to a South-end bowls player for appearing in exposed braces. What of Mrs. Sispera, or those two missing diplomats Dedijer and Djilas? What of the religious revival, in which a large black cloud over London sent people into the churches to pray?

Yet there was much that was memorable in 1955. In the sphere of politics and the state the oyster-catcher was added to the second schedule to the Protection of Birds Act, the Big Four dwindled to the Big Two, the Kaiser's grandson turned out to be a British subject and Mr. Norman Dodds pleaded for the restoration of gymnasium facilities in the Houses of Parliament—a building which, according to a stern warning from Sir Frank Whittle, was gradually being turned into Epsom salts. The vigorous state of the Services was demonstrated by an Admiral's hat being knocked overboard by an impatient rating, R.A.F. men serving at mess dinners in powdered wigs and silk breeches, and a rendering of "Why

Are We Waiting?" by soldiers paraded for inspection by a visiting general. National servicemen made their mothers proud by declining to direct I.R.A. raiders to the armoury. Government spokesmen promised seven thousand million bricks for housing and twelve hundred million pounds for the railways. Rabbits were abolished. Newspaper match-makers were frustrated by highly-placed spoilsports, and a General Election succeeded in unseating Mr. Bing. Westminster Pier sank.

By deed and word reputations were created, sustained or impaired. A Mr. Baty cancelled the Trooping the Colour ceremony. Dr. Summerskill confided to a hushed House that she had done her courting in black cashmere stockings, and Mr. Billy Wallace asked where people got the idea that he spent his life popping balloons. Mr. Burgess's mother received a Christmas card and got into the headlines. Dr. Schweitzer "arrived." Mr. Ronald Ledger, M.P., was united with nine nephews and nieces through the medium of his maiden speech. Sensations were caused by the various remarks of the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Rev. Basil Andrews. The Dukes of Edinburgh

and Kent made polo and motoring news and the Earl of Harewood drank rice wine in his socks. Among the sayings of the year must be recorded "The greatest danger to peace is war" (Mr. Nehru); "A peaceful world is not possible if people resort to war" (Mr. Dulles); "We have thirty-five years' supply of tinned hamburgers" (U.S. Secretary of the Navy).

Journalism expanded healthily, particularly in television coverage, which by the end of the year occupied half the papers and all the placards. The *Woman's Sunday Mirror* appeared, with such advanced items as "I'm Going to Have a Baby the Natural Way." The *Times* had a correspondence on dogs in stained glass windows and disclosed the news "No Change in Size of Trawl Net Mesh." The *Observer* and the *Sunday Times* began scraping the barrel for Profile material; investigations were conducted into various matters of general interest, such as the British lunatic asylum, and the *Daily Express*, in the intervals of electing Lord Beaverbrook the man of the century, revealed that left-handed cats are twice as common as right-handed cats. The tea scandal led to many witty headlines. The Press were unanimous about the iniquity of the newspaper strike, during which copies of *The Scotsman* changed hands for huge sums and many papers were expected to be put out of business for good, but none was.

The scientists enjoyed a year of solid progress, and the expression "Seven hundred square miles of destruction" was bandied freely. Automation arrived, sometimes disguised as automaticity. Improved protective clothing was devised for agricultural workers engaged in spraying poison on the British vegetable. Rain was made. The Boot Trades Research Association found women's feet to be a quarter of an inch longer in Scotland, and Imperial Chemical Industries were reported to employ more people than the Royal Navy. No one blamed the hot summer on thermonuclear experiments. Abroad, Japanese scientists produced their first blue-prints for a guided missile and had them stolen from a car in a Tokyo street; and an American announced that a man stroking nine thousand, two



"Have you the same thing in C sharp?"



"That? That's a place called Piltown. Uninhabited."

hundred million cats on a cold day could produce enough electricity to light a seventy-five-watt bulb. Improved hydrodynamics enabled a crowd of thirty thousand to be hosed clear of the Comet III on an Australian airfield.

In the field of the arts it was the turn of the Walker Gallery, Liverpool, to hit the news with a picture hung upside down. Cinema screens were thought to have attained maximum elongation, and film publicity was heightened in sympathy ("Can You Face the Horror that Sprawls?"). Miss Gina Lollobrigida had her portrait done by twenty-five artists simultaneously, Miss Marilyn Monroe expressed a wish to play in *The Brothers Karamazov* and public houses in Aylesbury were permitted to stay open an extra half-hour to capture the post-viewing custom. Brook and Shakespeare entertained in Moscow, Bulganin and Khrushchev in New Delhi and Rangoon. The theatre went batty over Betti. Literature ran chiefly to reissues of Famous Trials and the fortnightly *Simenon*. In between the A-line and the Y-line fashion designers introduced a new shape for women, the Slink. It slunk. Spring brought the usual autumn fashion shows, with hats described as "hatty," and Aly Khan's trousers, by common journalistic consent, were adjudged too long. Parisian perfumes penetrated unaccustomed targets when sprayed through the tunnels of the Metro.

The sporting world sustained several setbacks, including Zatopek's astounding admission that he had never heard of Stanley Matthews. Denis Compton's kneecap and Gordon Pirie's Achilles tendon monopolized hundreds of square miles of back pages. A man was towed across the Channel on water-skis. Advocates of less spectating and more participating were gratified when one hundred and forty people fought police with revolvers and tear-gas at a Naples football match, and the aqualung vogue filled the Mediterranean with inverted umbrella handles. On the B.B.C. the word "sportsfan" was born. Viewers switching on at any hour of the day or night found men reading swimming results in a Lancashire accent.

All in all, then, 1955 has been a year of outstanding activity and achievement. A final round-up of items difficult to classify would have to include the Nicaragua-Costa Rica war, which few journalists reached in time to cover, and the appearance, unremarked, in Pottstown, Pennsylvania, of a man dressed as a Russian general. The manuscript of the *Marseillaise* was stolen from the British Museum. There was bad feeling between Harrogate and Blackpool over who should have the Gifts and Fancy Goods Trade Fair. A new recording of the National Anthem was introduced to close B.B.C. programmes, and caused less of a stir than Mrs. Knight, a doomed calf, Mr.

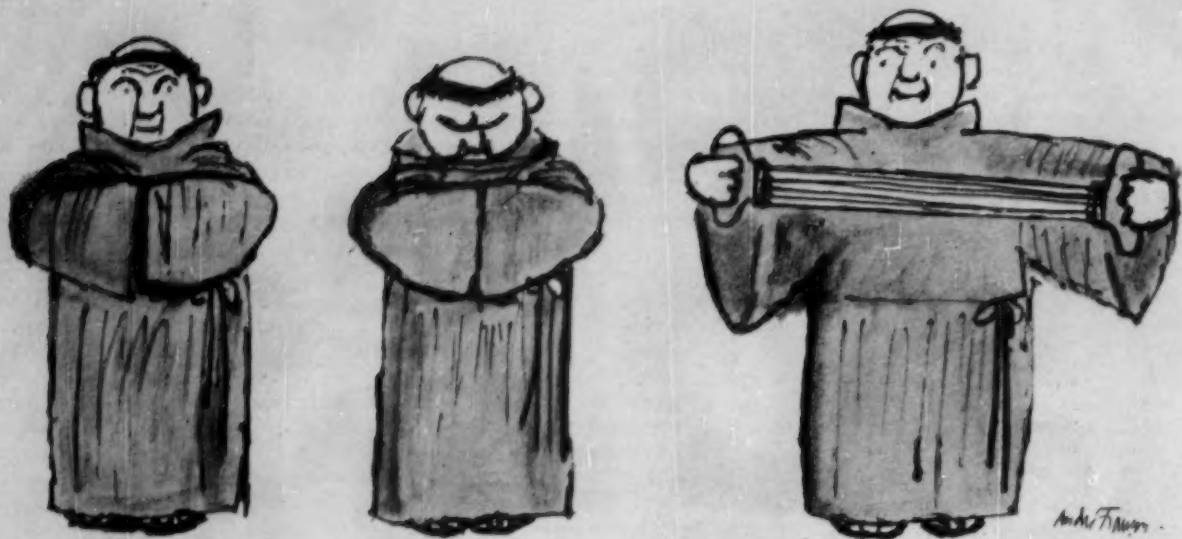
Plantagenet Fry or any panel-game neckline. In their respective pans Allanbay Hall and Arborfield Camp flashed and died; an Irish auctioneer fell into the basement with lots and bidders; Noël Coward and the atom were spectacular at Las Vegas. Air Vice-Marshal John L. Plant of Canada said that the West could beat the pants off the Russians and was relieved of his post. Rockall was captured. The Institution of Mechanical Engineers debated the motion: "There is no future in Britain for the Motor-scooter." Fruit was thrown at Buenos Aires cathedral.

Over all there hung a faint air of expectancy. We seemed to be waiting for something. But what it was—a doubled standard of living, a twenty-two inch screen, or just Godot—no one really knew.

"24-year-old American actress Judith Wyler . . . in to-night's play . . . as Jenny the cow-girl, falls in love with Oscar Wilde, when he visits America, because of his long hair and English manners. Miss Wyler likes English manners . . . 'I like the way an Englishman takes your arm when you cross the street. I like the Victorianism in English men . . . My great-grandmother lived on a farm near Kiev. One day she went out to feed the chickens. It was shortly after her 112th birthday. She was killed by lightning.' Miss Wyler laughed."

Evening Standard

Ask her how she stands on the English sense of humour.



A Woman of a Certain Class

By PAUL DEHN

I HAVE only kept silent so long because the English gentleman in me shies, like one of my own hunters, at the idea of betraying a woman. But when Miss Nancy Mitford explicitly states that by a person's vocabulary you may recognize his or her class, and implicitly suggests that by her own vocabulary—e.g. the use of "writing-paper" for "notepaper"—we may recognize her as upper-class (U) rather than lower-middle-class (non-U), my *noblesse* refuses to *oblige*.

If language is (as I devoutly believe) an historical indicator of social status, then Miss Mitford's status as revealed by her language is open to the ghastliest misgiving. Since my own reputation as an etymologist has always been modestly confined to a limited academic circle, I prefer to emphasize this misgiving by quotation from the more widely-accepted, historically incontrovertible Oxford English Dictionary.

Miss Mitford says that "They have a very lovely *home*" is non-U for "They've a very nice *house*" (U).

House [con. with verbal root *hūd-* of *hýdan*—to HIDE, from Indo-European stem *keudh-*] 1. A building for human habitation. b. The portion of a building occupied by one tenant or family. 2. A place of worship; a temple; a church. b. An inn, tavern 1550. 3. A building for the keeping of cattle, birds, plants, goods, etc., 1503...

c. A boarding-house attached to a public school... f. A place of business.

Home [Old English *hām*]. 1. A village or town. 2. A dwelling-place, house, abode; the fixed residence of a family or household; one's own house; the dwelling in which one habitually lives, or which one regards as one's proper abode. The place of one's dwelling or nurturing, with its associations 1460.

You see? There were these Indo-European Mitfords skulking in Christian churches or hiding in their portions of buildings (designed for cattle and birds and plants and goods) which they later turned into taverns, boarding-houses and places of business—while we Old English Dehns were dwelling and being nurtured (from about 1460 onwards) in whole villages, towns, fixed residences and proper abodes with associations. We may even, without knowing it, have harboured an Abou Ben Mitford in one of our granaries. After what fashion, you may ask, can he have lived there? Listen.

"U-speakers," says Miss Mitford, "eat *luncheon* in the middle of the day and *dinner* in the evening. Non-U speakers have their *dinner* in the middle of the day."

Now *luncheon*, as any fool etymologist knows, is an expanded form of the older word *lunch* (derived from LUMP on the analogy of hump, hunch, bump,

bunch.) It means: "A piece, a thick piece."

Luncheon. 1. = LUNCH. 2. A repast taken between two meal-times, esp. in the morning. Still so applied by those who dine at midday. With others, *luncheon* denotes a less ceremonious meal than dinner.

Dinner [Middle English *diner*]. The chief meal of the day, eaten originally, and still by many, about midday; but now, by the fashionable classes, in the evening.

Under *Dinner*, note the pejorative antithesis between "originally" (i.e. traditionally) and "now" (fashionably, ephemerally). We Dehns have always kept up our mediæval family-practice of "dining at midday," while the Mitfords (slightly referred to in the O.E.D. as "others") less ceremoniously gnaw and chumble their thick pieces between two civilized meal-times. What do they actually eat? "*Greens*," says Miss Mitford, "is non-U for U *vegetables*."

Greens. Green vegetables such as are boiled for the table 1725.

Vegetable. 1. A living organism belonging to the lower of the two series of organic beings; a growth devoid of animal life. 2. An edible herb or root used for human consumption and commonly eaten, either cooked or raw, with meat or other articles of food 1767.

Mark that "commonly." Half a century after my family had first eaten decently

cooked greens, these upstart Mitfords arrived by caravan from God knows where behind the Karakorams and began commonly chewing roots, raw growths devoid of life, and low, living organisms. It makes one sick.

What else do they eat between meals? "Sweet," says Miss Mitford, "is non-U for U pudding."

Sweet [Middle English]. 1. That which is sweet to the taste; something having a sweet taste. b. A sweet food or drink.

Pudding [Middle English *poding*, deriv. unkn.]. I. 1. The stomach or one of the entrails of a pig, sheep or other animal, stuffed with minced meat, suet, seasoning, etc., boiled and kept till needed; a kind of sausage. 2. Bowels; entrails, guts. II. 1. A preparation of food of a soft or moderately firm consistency, in which the ingredients, animal or vegetable, are either mingled in a farinaceous basis, or are enclosed in a farinaceous crust, and cooked by boiling or steaming. Preparations of batter, milk and eggs, rice, sago, suitably seasoned, and cooked by baking, are now also called puddings.

It will not, I assure you, be pleasant—as I traditionally eat my sweet food and drink my sweet drink—to think of these hirsute, half-naked, Transcaucasian Mitfords spooning up great helpings of batter, rice and suitably seasoned sago or (at worst) of guts, entrails and even bowels cooked by steaming. And where, I should like to know, did they find the pigs whose stomachs they stuffed and kept (under their straw pallets?) till needed? In one of our family sties, no doubt. Tartar nomads who live furtively in portions of buildings designed for cattle are not immune from such temptations.

What do they do when they have finished their savage meal? "Serviette," says Miss Mitford, "is exaggeratedly non-U usage for *napkin*."

Now the O.E.D. is quite right in saying of *serviette*: "latterly considered vulgar." Naturally it was so considered—by the sort of Mongolian immigrants who reached England latterly enough to be ignorant that we horn-and-bred, dyed-in-the-wool Englishmen were using the word as early (says the O.E.D.) as 1489. It means, and meant then, "a table-napkin." And how disturbing to find that the word *napkin*, if not preceded by the cumbersome prefix *table-*, can mean "an infant's diaper." It must be small comfort for Miss Mitford to

know that her ancestors were at least civilized enough to *provide* their infants with diapers when she has to weigh such knowledge against the unspeakably nauseous use of these same diapers to . . . to . . . but, no. One's gorge heaves. Quick! My serviette!

Did they wash? Not, it appears, until 1656. "Toilet," says Miss Mitford, is "non-U for *lavatory*."

Toilet. A dressing-room; in U.S. *esp.*, a dressing-room furnished with bathing facilities.

Lavatory. An apartment with apparatus for washing the hands and face; now often combined with water-closets, etc. 1656. A laundry 1661. A place for washing gold 1727.

It was in 1495, some months after Columbus's return from America, that my family installed the first New World "toilet" at Dehn Towers. Even then it was far in advance of the primitive "apparatus" occasionally to be found in those portions of buildings inhabited

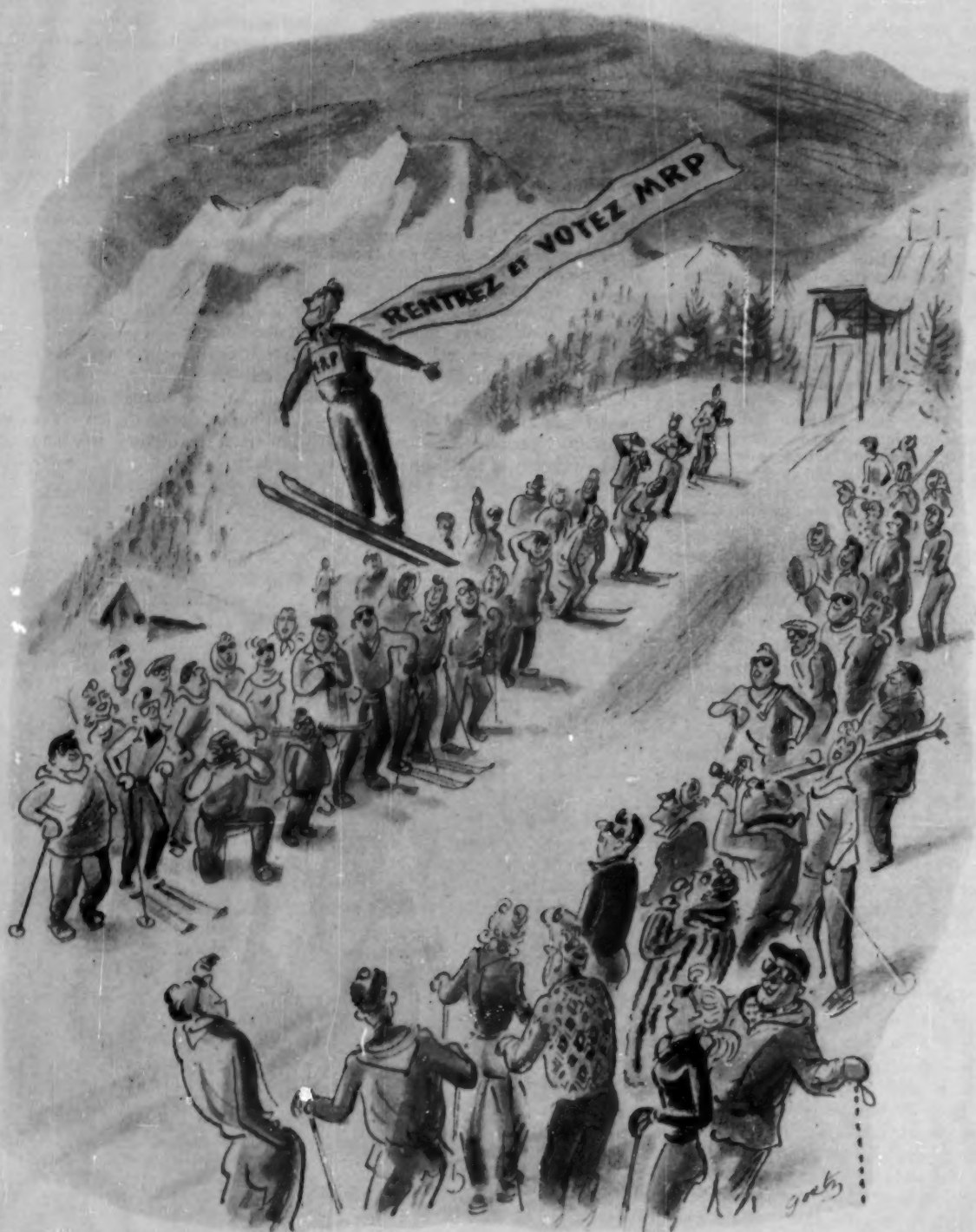
by the vagabond Mitfords. We have called it the Toilet for four and a half centuries. After 1727 we had a Lavatory too of course, but only for washing gold.

A very painful composite-picture now emerges of the Mitford sect—which I hope will finally put paid to their fantastic social pretensions. I see them, these huge, swart, hispid gipsies, after their mid-morning meal of lumps—their stomachs distended with suet and entrails, their mouths streaming with raw roots and lower organisms whose tell-tale traces they have been unable to wipe away with a hastily snatched-up baby's diaper. They rush to the washing-apparatus combined with water-closet in that portion of the cowbyre which tribal custom forbids them to call "home." And what do they find? Nothing but writing-paper.

It's amazing that the line isn't extinct. But then barbarians are notoriously hardy.



"Is it part of it—or should we tell him?"



"I suppose it's a bid for the upper-class vote."

The Ice Age

By LORD KINROSS

FROM the motor-coaches parked like beasts in a kraal, past the counters of hot dogs and ice creams and light refreshments, the people, appropriately muffled and duffed, swarm into the arena in silent, expectant thousands. British citizens, like Roman ones, thronging the Colosseums of an imperial heyday—Earl's Court and Wembley, the Empress Hall, the Empire Pool—they have come to gloat over the more rarefied spectacles of the age of decline. Soon, doubtless, they will be in Space. For the present they are on Ice. The orgies they crave are not merely of dogs pursuing artificial hares but of girls pursuing girls across artificial ice.

Turning up coat collars, drawing rugs around knees, the citizens suck their ice lollies and gaze. From space, from a firmament of girders and amplifiers and arc-lamps and overhead rails, light floods down on to the ice, sound echoes around it. The light, great cones of it, transfigures the girls, turning them pistachio green and purple and puce, flinging their shadows across the ice, grotesque amid a galaxy of contending coloured ellipses. The sound, great waves of it, rends the ears of the citizens: first music, then dialogue, voices thunderous, disembodied, impersonal, unintelligible but to the initiates, the great élite for whom the Voice of the Microphone, the Voice of the Gods roars more sublimely than the voice of mere man.

The revolving girls, flesh and blood maybe, but remote and mouthing inaudibly, are no more than its dumb instruments. Its divine intermediaries mouth to their microphones within the insulating limbo of a glass case, like an aquarium, poised midway between space and ice, between gods and girls.

By this process, for those who have ears to hear as well as eyes to see, a tale unfolds over the green and puce ice (thick ice, 300 tons, 20,000 square feet). Here it is the tale of *Dick Whittington* (1600 costumes, £122,000, boy principal boy); there of the *Babes in the Wood* (1600 costumes, £130,000, girl principal boy, boy and girl babes with grown women's voices); each has in addition a few V.I.P.s like the Emperor of Morocco, Jack and Jill, Robin Hood,

Mephistopheles and Richard Cœur de Lion thrown in—and on to skates. Regardless of seasons, the ice pantomimes will run well into the spring.

The Ice Age outclasses the age of land pantomimes in its confounding of the unities of light and sound and time and geography and nature. The tales the girls skate through are in no way concerned with the elements of ice and snow. No Icelandic sagas here, featuring Eskimos and Snow Queens; no conquests of Everest, featuring Sherpas and Abominable Snowmen; not even Anna Karenina on Ice, featuring Cossacks and sleigh-bells.

In the drama of the deep-freeze all is unseasonable. Roofs—of Old Cheapside, of Nottingham Fair—are innocent of snowdrifts, caves of icicles, branches of silvery hoar-frost. Heads are bare of astrakhan, shoulders of sable. Puss on Skates is no ermine, nor even a silver-blu mink, but a mangy black Tom. His victims are not even white mice. No chorus of seals, silver foxes or penguins attends principal boy, whether boy in fact or girl. Not a sleigh is to be seen, not a reindeer. The bears (two of the two per cent non-British cast) ride bicycles and are brown, not polar.

The ice moves stealthily down over the world from the Poles. Dick Whittington

is transported in succession to an ice Sahara and an ice tropical jungle, where houris and Negro slaves, giraffes and tigers can only get around on skates. The Babes, in the intervals of a cruise in a space-ship (*Space on Ice*), repose in a Sherwood Forest where there is a hard frost in midsummer, enjoying Cupid's Bower and a *Midsummer Night's Dream*, complete with Pan, Aphrodite (*sic*), the Fairy Stardust and Bottom on ice. Elsewhere palm trees sprout from the thick ice, orchid-plants and bluebells four foot high.

Over all no Northern Lights shine but the lights of the tropics; no Midnight Sun but a desert moon. In the costumes—apart from a red-white-and-blue cavalcade of Crusaders—amber ousts silver, puce ice-blue. Ice cream indeed, rather than the Arctic Circle, inspires the ice pantomime—cones and parfaits, melbas and splits and all. Nothing approaching their transformation scenes can be seen in a month of sunaeds.

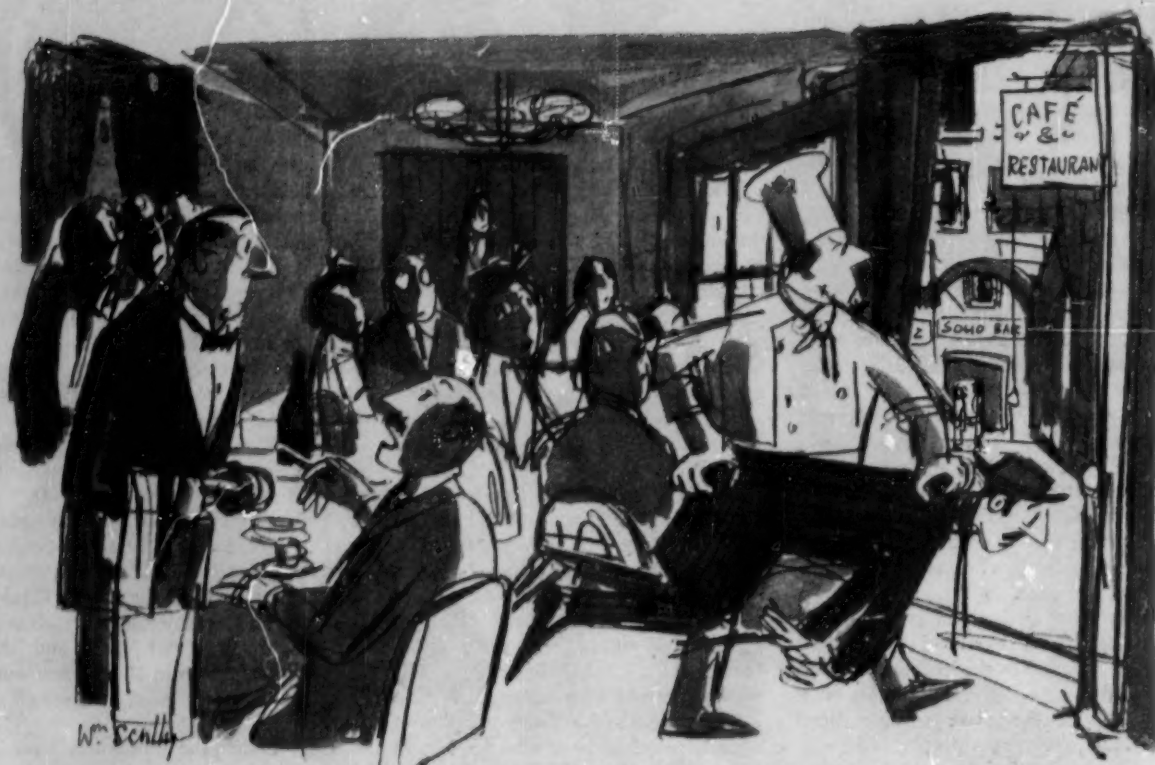
Confounding the unities once more in terms of speed, the Ice Age slows down at intervals from ballet to clownery, from the stirring pace of the jet to the humdrum pace of the bumpkin. Ice dames, ice comedians, ice clowns learn laboriously to skate, then do so as

Giovannetti's

Zoo

"Cold Feet."





"My compliments to the chef."

carefully as though still in goloshes. Addressing microphones like frying-pans, their voices resound from the firmament with an incomprehensible, ear-splitting mockery. Thus bellowing, they scratch red noses, sit on chairs which collapse, take off their trousers, squirt water at each other, drive a Harry Tate car (without even anti-skid chains), and put the dame into a washing-machine (not even a deep-freeze).

No breaking of the ice here, no thin ice either, no inspired Charlie Chaplin with the skates on, no streamlined slapstick but for an occasional quartet of Eskimos, a pair of American drunks (on the rocks), or the dame doing contortions. Then men shuffle on in boots and spread mats on the ice for the acrobats.

Throughout the spectacle the citizens whistle with shrill delight. To the less initiated, half the time, "*C'est magnifique, mais ce n'est pas la glace.*" To put it more briefly, "Why ice?"

Robert Herrick Answers the Door

A KNOCKING I did heare: the doore unhasp't,
I there discried a Gypsie Wench, who claspt
Betwixt her finger and her daintie thumb
A Plastic Washable Chrysanthemum:
The which Hygienick flower she pray'd me take
Either for Kindnesse, or Good Fortune's sake.
Faire Maid (said I) Ile none of this false Flower,
Since I expend so much Poetic power
Discoursing on how soone the Roses fall,
And how each blossome is Ephemerall.
So, beare it hence; nay call me not unkinde,
But rather praise my Singlenesse of minde.
Frowning she turn'd away; who being gone,
I fell into a Reverie thereon,
How sweeter it had been (yet not amisse)
To buy a Flowre, and then to beg a Kisse;
Possest with which intent I stept out-side
And thought t'ave call'd her back; but then I cry'd
No, Herrick, thinke, how ill 'twould thee become
To starte and launder a Chrysanthemum.

DOROTHY S. HOWARD



"You surely don't suppose I'm going to allow mere proof to sway my opinion."

Beak and Claw

By H. F. ELLIS

WHEN it comes to a contest between Sir David Eccles and two hundred and thirty-five thousand Teachers and Schoolmasters my sympathies are with the majority. What does *he* know about it? If he ever sat up on a dais with chalk all over his waistcoat and thirty pairs of innocent, wide-open eyes following his every movement, he certainly says nothing about it in *Who's Who*. A man ought to do ten years in the aroma of ink and Elementary Algebra textbooks, tramping up and down corridors painted dark green to shoulder height and cream above, before he starts talking about teachers making a "song and dance" because they are going to have even less money than they had before. And if Sir David did do ten year's teaching in that unrecorded period before he

joined the Ministry of Economic Warfare in 1939, and just thought it too trivial an occupation to enter in the reference books, then the sooner he goes back and does another ten (I dare say the profession would agree) the better. There is nothing like refreshing the mind about the way other people sing and dance for a living.

Still, if one feels rather warmer towards the teachers than to the Minister, as one reads the brisk history of their exchanges, that is not to say that one is altogether struck dumb with admiration over the action they (the teachers) are (or were) proposing to take. There is a depressingly negative air, a certain lack of dash, about not collecting children's savings. And ditto not distributing milk. Man is not at his most effective when just standing about in

groups, refraining. A positive attitude—"Ajax Defying the Lighting," say—is always a better bet than the rather lackadaisical "Assistant Master Refusing to Distribute Milk." Nor is the situation greatly improved, to my mind, by the threat not to run school games and dramatic societies. Who is to tell when the staff have finished not distributing milk and started not running the dramatic society?

It is probably too late now, but if the National Union of Teachers had asked my advice at the start I should certainly have urged their members to work to rule. Nothing clams up a time-table (one might almost say a curriculum) more effectively than distributing milk very, very slowly. The procedure is easy to learn, and unassailable on moral grounds. All you have to do is to

measure out each child's allowance with great accuracy, using all the technological aids available, and thereafter make a record of the issue in copperplate handwriting (and preferably in triplicate). Properly handled, the milk issue should last right through until it is time either to start collecting savings—a thing that ought always to be done with meticulous attention to detail—or to check the measurements of the football field with a six-inch rule as a preliminary to the afternoon's games. Whether there will then remain enough time to run through the opening speech of *Julius Caesar* a hundred and fifty times only experienced school-teachers will know.

The supreme advantage of working to rule, instead of not performing this or that extra-curricular activity at all, is that it does not rob the children either of their milk or of the thrill of handing over some of their pocket-money; whereas it *does* rob Sir David Eccles of the opportunity of saying (as he did), "it seems a doubtful proposition that the teachers should think that, by injuring children, they should advance their own cause." Just how well that remark went down among the members of a profession that has devoted its life, for meagre rewards, to the care of children, is anybody's guess; it might be

thought that a man capable of making it was wasted in the Ministry of Education and ought to be hustled across to Downing Street straight away to stiffen up the Foreign Office. But that is by the way. What matters now is that school-teachers should get clearly into their heads the advantages of a "go slow" protest.

The last thing anybody wants is a whole string of blacklegging allegations in the Common Room. And that sort of thing is inevitable if you try to bring the axe down on every kind of extraneous or "out of school" activity. Somebody will weaken. Some soft-hearted geography mistress will be caught collecting savings from a curly-headed under-five; milk will be secretly distributed to thirsty 11-plus candidates; talebearers will report that the Headmaster himself is carrying on clandestine rehearsals of *The Mikado* in his study. Then, inevitably, will follow all the misery of "unofficial trials," expulsions from the Union, and even crueller forms of punishment. No school can function efficiently when half the Common Room is in Coventry.

Working to rule avoids these pitfalls. Teachers are an adaptable lot, and will soon learn to carry out their duties with exemplary delay. The public will be reassured, for they are well accustomed

to go-slow tactics in other walks of life and regard them as no more than a useful intimation that somebody is shortly about to be paid more for something. The children will continue to receive, with the inevitability of gradualness, the services and amenities they have a right to expect, and will be robbed of nothing more valuable than a sizeable slice of their working hours—a loss they are likely to support with their wonted good humour. Only the Minister, gnawing his knuckles in baffled rage, seems at all likely to make a song and dance about it.

Thoughts at a Party

New Year's Eve

*R*ing out, wild bells, to the wild sky.

Ring, happy bells, across the snow

And through the straining radio
To drown this New Year revelry:

One ladles out a winy brew

That neither lifts nor lulls the heart;

One argues with himself, apart.

Ring out the old, ring in the new.

Ring out old shapes of foul disease.

Ring out our Pyrrhic diplomats.

Ring out the public men whose hats
Are all their personalities.

Ring out the unenhancing smile

Of the departing voyager.

Ring out the tepid-gospeller.

Ring out the wincing Indophile.

Ring in the promised year to come:

New conferences no less vain

With new proposals no more plain,

A vaguer hope, a larger bomb.

Ring out, wild bells, or let it be;

I cannot care what you ring in.

Besides, your Tennysonian din

Across a frozen century

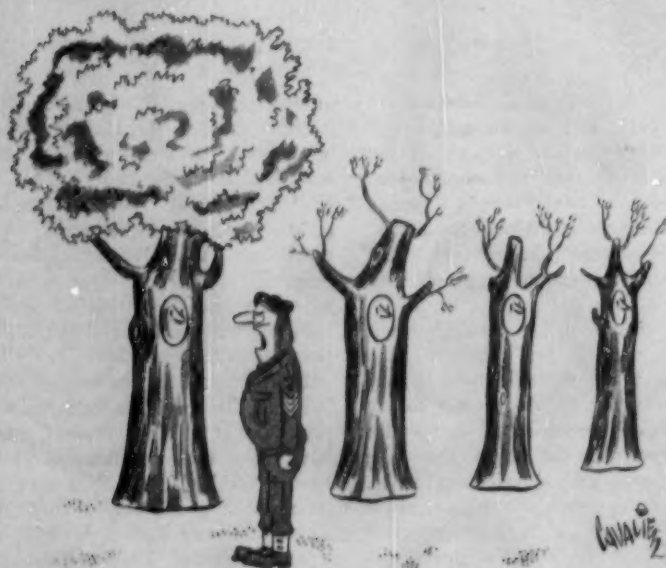
Falls faintly upon the ear.

Nor can your midnight wrangle move

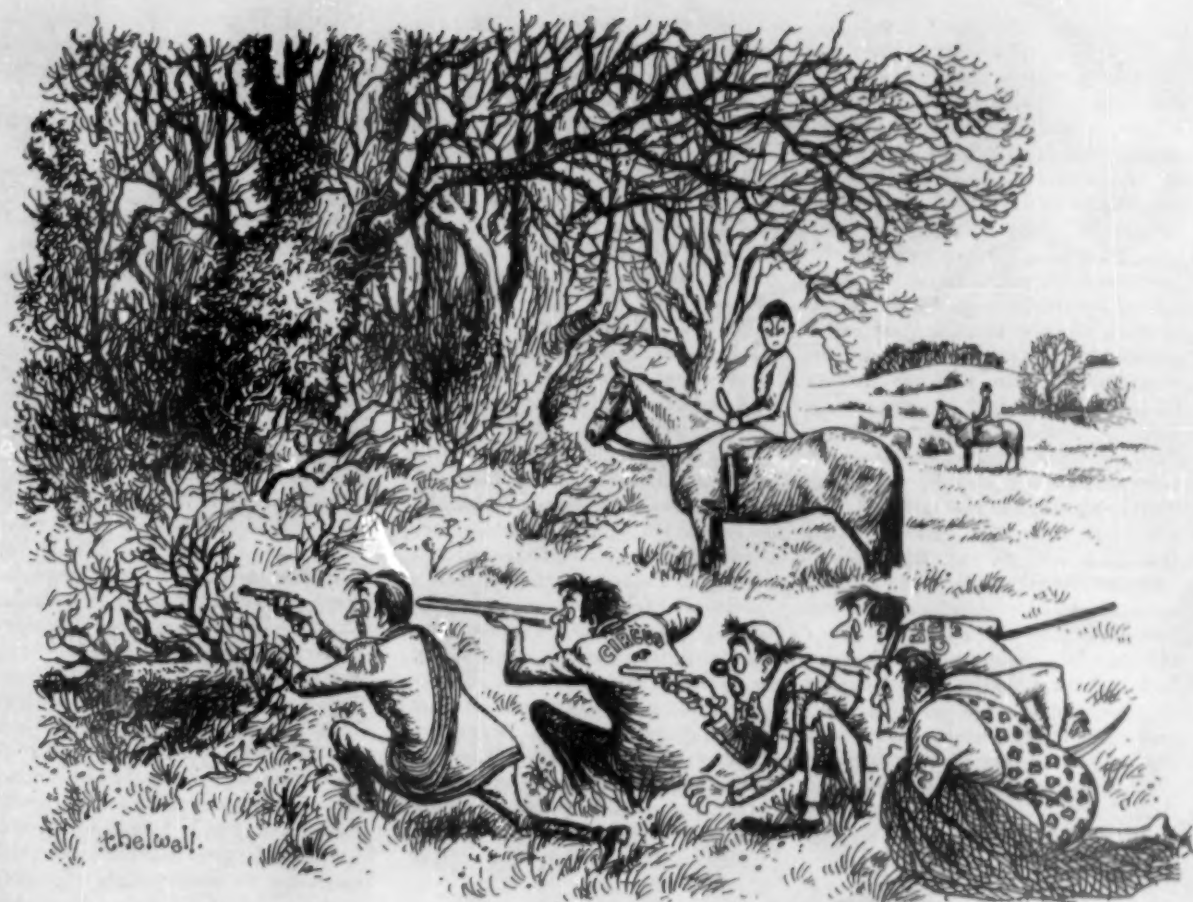
One inch from its appointed groove

The folly of the coming year.

PETER DICKINSON



"Haircut!"



Elegy to a Dead Dog

By ANTHONY CARSON

IGNACIO TORRES had a studio at the top of a high house in Paloma, south of Barcelona. Room wandered to room, packed with hangings, iron-work, oil paintings, glazed earthenware jars, crockery, gourds and mirrors, and ended at a breathless red and ochre roofscape framed in a window. You had to gasp, there were so many mysterious roofs, and the sky was as blue as a ribbon.

Ignacio Torres was a small man. He was so furious at not being taller that he used to jump up and down when he was alone, shaking his fists at the roofs. He was a builder and decorator, but he could smell divinity in shapes and colours, and what he saw flashed in his mind like a diamond. He also painted landscapes and portraits very badly.

The spark failed and he made up for this by designing enormous murals in the castles of profiteers, high up on long ladders like a monkey, throwing out his chest. Only thus was he a tall man.

When he was not in his studio, or his castles, or his house, he turned himself into a buffoon. He capered about the streets, or sat in the Café Lux making faces at people. The police never interfered with him, because he was labelled "Artist." In Spain the madness of the artist, if not his wisdom, is sacrosanct. He formed part of a *tertulia*, or group, and stabbed each friend in the back with a sharp, invisible knife. At night he sat in the open-air night-club and watched the dancers, hate in his heart. Only once I saw him dancing himself, and that was with a

minute woman whom he whirled around like a top, clearing the floor.

One night I was sitting with him in the club watching a dance by a pair of synthetic Barcelona gipsies when a peculiar dog strolled on to the floor. It paused there bathed in the spotlight. It was a composite sort of dog with a high tail and back-street ears, and did not appear so much lost as misdirected. "There's Tani," cried Ignacio at the top of his voice. "Tani, Tani!" The dog looked up and strolled slowly over to our table, with the slight haste of a late guest. It lay down under the table and closed its eyes. "Is this your dog?" I asked Ignacio. "Certainly not," he said. "He is no one's dog. He is a poet, a philosopher, a *torero*. He sometimes stays with me, sometimes with the

rag-man near the cathedral, or with the priest of San Roman, or in a brothel by the tobacco factory, but mostly he sleeps in the street. I always know where he is because the children tell me, or the police, or the postman." Ignacio bent down and peered at the dog. "It is strange," he continued, "but he is not sleeping, he is thinking." While Ignacio looked at the dog his eyes were gentle and his voice was soft. This amazed me. In Spain you do not expect to find random sentimentality connected with animals, there is no emotional projection into fur, hide or feathers. "Do you like dogs very much?" "Not dogs," answered Ignacio, "any more than I like people. I suppose all Spaniards are excited by the idea of liberty, because we have so little of it, and I am attracted towards the Don Quixote in this animal. He refuses to conform, he strolls airily along the pavements, he has his salt, he chooses his friends, he even escapes from conventional doggery. He doesn't even bark." Later we went down below to the café, followed by the dog, and everybody in the *tertulia* patted him, and Tani curled himself up and thought.

A week later a boy got bitten by a dog. The dog had rabies. The next day

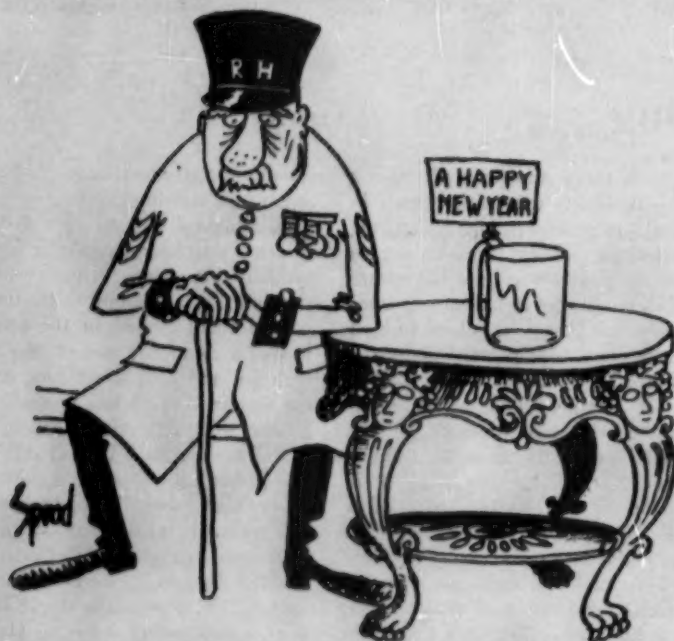
another boy got bitten by a dog. The Paloma radio station, after announcing the triumphal opening of a new bus station in Galicia, attended by the Caudillo, made a statement about dogs. The voice of the announcer was slightly hysterical, he almost seemed to be barking. All dogs had to be registered, identified, documented, inoculated, and any dogs without visible means of support would be summarily destroyed. *Arriba España, Viva Franco.*

When I saw Ignacio that evening he was still playing the buffoon. Nothing is more important to Spaniards than saving face, than talking round the sword. All the *tertulia* talked around the sword, until Ignacio slipped up to the night-club to outstare the dancers, and they told me the truth. Tani couldn't be found. He hadn't been to the beach, to the church of San Roman, to the brothel or the rag shop. He had to be found immediately, in order to be registered, documented, inoculated and transformed into a civic dog. Ignacio had procured and filled in the necessary papers, had bought an identity disc, and made a date with the dog doctor.

Later that night the rag-man appeared at the café. "Tani is in prison," he said. "He has been condemned to death."

"By whom?" shouted Ignacio, in the voice of a giant. "By the Mayor," answered the rag-man. At once all the *tertulia* rose to their feet. The group was composed of diverse and conflicting trends, "Patria" the Falangist reporter, Antonio the rebel conscript, business men, idlers, fathers of families, students. Without saying a word, Ignacio marched from the café and we followed, up the street from the sea, under a moon like a silver spider, across the Avenue of Generalissimo Franco, past the crouching cathedral, to the house of his Excellency the Mayor. Ignacio knocked at the door, and a woman opened it. "I demand to see the Mayor," he shouted. "His Excellency is busy," said the woman. She was quite tall, and she looked down on the furious little builder like a tree. "He's not too busy to see that justice is done," he cried. At this a stout man, quite bald, appeared in the doorway, wiping shreds of lobster from his mouth with a napkin. "What do you want?" he asked, peering forward at our faces. "The release of Tani," said Ignacio. "Who or what is Tani?" asked the Mayor. "He is a dog," replied Ignacio. "A dog? A dog?" cried the Mayor, suddenly roaring with laughter. "You imprisoned him," said Ignacio, trembling all over. "What if I did?" said the Mayor, still laughing. "I am defending the safety of the public. Children, defenceless women, the aged. I will not let a single vagabond dog imperil them. He shall be destroyed. It is my duty. Good-night!" He shut the door, and we could still hear his laughter, like grasshoppers rattling in a box.

The next morning Ignacio visited the dogs' pound with a jug of milk and some bones. The dog died at six, but from the expression on Ignacio's face you would never have known it. The local paper, *Hoy*, came out with a magnificent obituary from which it appeared that Tani had once had an owner from whom he had run away—the Mayor.



Moderation in All Things

"Because their second son was born on Prince Charles's birthday (yesterday) Mr. Bryan Marshall, the National Hunt jockey, and his wife, Mary, have decided that one at least of the child's names shall be Charles."

Evening News

World's Workers

By P. G. WODEHOUSE

THE turn of the year leaves me a little wistful and wondering if

I was altogether wise when back in the days of Edward the Confessor I decided to make my living as a writer. Of course I haven't done so badly. Over the years I have built up a nice conservative business and am able to afford the necessities and occasionally the luxuries of life. But when I see what some of the other chaps are doing in some of the other professions . . . I am thinking at the moment of Cleveland Lockwood, forty, of 19 West 106th Street, New York; of John Miller, forty-three, of Philadelphia; of Betty Adams, twenty-one, of 311 West 110th Street; and Charles Wenzel, forty-five, of Hoboken. The police have been making themselves a bit unpleasant about the above, but to me they seem to have been on the right lines and when they come out I shall give them a brotherly pat on the back. To my mind it is initiative and know-how like theirs that have made America what it is.

James Joyce—no, not the one you are thinking of—this one is a sailor who lives in Philadelphia—recently was awarded damages for a back injury suffered while working on his ship, and when he met the Messrs Lockwood and Miller he had \$21,000. They speedily adjusted this, and on parting from them he had \$14,800.

The acquaintance began in what

statesmen call an atmosphere of the utmost cordiality. Mr. Joyce ran across Mr. Lockwood in a bar and told him what a lot of money he had got, and Mr. Lockwood said Yes, that was nice money, but wouldn't he like more? It appeared that Mr. Lockwood had a friend, a Mr. Miller, who had invented a box containing a magic fluid that made ten dollar bills. Was Mr. Joyce interested? Yes, said Mr. Joyce, he was. It was a box of this precise nature of which he had dreamed when splicing the mainbrace and porting his helm from one end of the seven seas to the other. He went with Mr. Lockwood to Mr. Miller's apartment, handed over a ten dollar bill, it was inserted in the box, there was a buzzing sound, and out came the ten dollar bill together with a second ten dollar bill. With a brief inquiry as to how long this had been going on, Mr. Joyce parted with \$6,200, and shortly afterwards Cleveland Lockwood and John Miller—his friends call him Jack—parted from Mr. Joyce. They were reunited about two months later by the New York constabulary.

Betty Adams, twenty-one, worked along similar lines, though with different methods. Her genius turned in the direction of medicine. Meeting Carol Y. Besson, a United Nations typist, she asked her to pause for a moment, examined her right palm, and delivered the following diagnosis:

"I can read your hand. You have bad luck with your stomach. Go home, light nineteen candles and return with thirty dollars wrapped round an egg."

This seemed sound enough to Miss Besson. It was just the sort of thing any good New York doctor would have recommended. She followed the instructions to the letter, but it turned out that further treatment was required.

"You still have bad luck with your stomach," said Doc Adams. "Bring back a bottle of water and thirty dollars . . ."

But even this did not effect a cure, and presently the patient was told to buy a rug to lie on for good luck . . . and, oh yes, to give her medical adviser seventy dollars. And—you will scarcely believe it—this did not work either, and it was then that Betty Adams put her finger on the seat of the trouble.

"Go to the jewellery store on 40th Street and 1st Avenue, get five hundred dollar's worth of jewellery on credit and bring it to me. A sure remedy for dyspepsia. In all my experience I have never known it to fail."

Unfortunately, Miss Besson told a boy friend about it, and the boy friend took a second opinion. He called in the cops, and when Miss Besson and Betty Adams arrived at the jeweller's, who should be waiting on the doorstep but Lieutenant Walter O'Connor and two gentlemanly assistants.

Interviewed later by the lieutenant, Miss Besson said:

"I had indigestion, so I thought I would give it a try."

But while one respects these practitioners and wishes them every success in their chosen careers, the man one really admires is Charles Wenzel of Hoboken, because he did down the income-tax authorities.

Income tax was inaugurated in the United States in 1913. No doubt it seemed to the authorities a good idea at the time, but most people feel that it was a mistake to allow it to develop into such a popular craze. Charles Wenzel did, and, more courageous than most of us, he decided to do something about it. He was recently accused of having received seven income-tax refunds totalling \$2,500, and evidence was brought to show that he was waiting for seventeen more government cheques averaging \$400 each.

Apparently his mode of procedure was to file a bogus return under a false name but a correct address, and then wait for the refund which he claimed. An unmarried man, he gave himself a wife and five children, and was just saying to himself "Nice going, Charlie. 'At's the stuff to give 'em, Wenzel," when Raymond Del Tufo Jr., United States attorney for New Jersey, came down on him like a ton of bricks.

I suppose that really is the objection to these industries, that the police are so infernally fussy. Over and over again they act in restraint of trade. So better perhaps to be content with my modest job. Though heaven knows I could do with some of that \$6,200 of James Joyce's. Just to think of it makes my mouth water.



Spatterdash

By EVOE

The Horror Comes Closer

IT was about a fortnight after the great darkness had enveloped all the southern counties of England, and the Government, despairing alike of agricultural labour and transport, had already decided to issue portions of medicated smog as a national food, when my friend Tiger Mackinnon, gazing into the spectroscope of his dynamometer, suddenly started back in his chair.

I could see the beads of perspiration standing out on his forehead above the band of the pig-snout which our biogenetic investigations had long compelled us to wear.

"By God, Spatterdash!" he exclaimed. "I knew it! I knew it!"

"What is biting you?" I asked.

"The spacial co-ordinates!"

"Ammonia?" I cried. "Niobium? Absquatulation? or could it be—?"

"x," he muttered hoarsely, "equals $x^1 + v^5$, $y = y^1$, $z = z^1$!"

"And then?"

" $\log b n + \log b n_1 = \log b n n_1$, $\log b n - \log b n_1 = \log b \frac{n}{n_1}$. $\log b n = \log b (n^1)!$ "

I could see that his senses were leaving him. "You mean that this is not our smog after all?"

"Only partly. It is seeping in from outer relativity. A meteorite has crept up under cover of our obfuscated atmosphere and is spraying it with differential calculi."

"Dial 999!"

He did so. There was nothing but a buzzing sound. That was how The Terror began.

The Stamp of Doom

It was a few days later that my daughter Iphigenia stole into the laboratory, pale as an arum lily, and touched my arm. I could see that she had been weeping.

"It is about Paul," she said. "He took off his pig-snout!"

"The fool, what for?"

"To kiss me," she murmured, blushing like a peony. "And then he changed suddenly and said that he loved me no longer. And there was a mark on his forehead."

"What sort of mark?"

"Pi."

"Pie?"

"The Greek letter."

I tried to hide my emotion, but the tears trickled down under my snout.

Lord Uttermore Acts

It was the same everywhere. The poison from the meteorite, which we called Bollonion, transformed the character of everyone who inhaled its miasmatic effluvium. Politics were thrown into confusion. The three principal leaders of the Labour party entered the House of Commons arm in arm, singing "Auld Lang Syne." The Conservative Prime Minister made a long speech defending Enosis in Sark. The worst elements of the population thrived on the vapour, the noblest sickened and died. Rabbits reappeared exhibiting remarkable ferocity, and ran about the city devouring cats and dogs. The pulpits were deserted. Forehead after forehead showed the terrible traces of π .

On the very day that Parliament decided to suspend Christmas, Lord Uttermore, the great newspaper proprietor, summoned me to his office.

"I have decided," he said, "to attack Bollonion at once."

"But all the regular rocket services are cancelled, my lord."

"I know it, Spatterdash. We will travel in my own private rocket. I have had it tipped with Silenium, and reinforced with Amygdaloid."

I breathed a mineralogical prayer.

"Impossible," I said at last.

"Not at all. The point has been specially sharpened with emery paper. Put on your armour at once!"

"Armour?" I ejaculated.

"I have borrowed the best suits of armour from the Tower. We shall carry two sten guns loaded with uranium, two maces and three oxygen pumps. Your daughter Iphigenia will accompany us."

"I entreat you—"

"The woman's point of view is most necessary. Her photographs are in my papers to-night. You may like to know that your friend Mackinnon has been arrested for rioting."

"Tiger Mackinnon?"

"There has been a strike of astronomers and Greenwich Observatory is in ruins. The B.B.C. have had to cancel their weather report."

I could but gasp and obey.

The Terrible Journey

We went up and up. How we penetrated the toughness of that terrible murk I shall never understand. It seemed eons before we emerged like a



REV. JAMES



tube train running out of a tunnel into the clear realms of space and beheld from the conning-tower of our rocket the icy tundras of Bollonion. Through an awful chasm in the meteorite's side we saw, flowing like lava, the venomous ooze designed to infect our planet. The pump was being operated by slimy shapes of indescribable foulness with writhing antennæ in the shape of algebraical formulæ. I dashed to one of the sten guns and was about to fire when I observed with the tail of my eye the menacing attitude of Lord Uttermore. He had seized one of the maces and was about to attack me. I turned like a panther and evaded him. His eyes were those of a maniac, and clear on his forehead stood the awful sign.

"I have decided to land on Bollonion," he shouted, "and integrate it with Earth."

Using a woman's swift intuition Iphigenia handed me the second mace. The rocket had been slowed down and we seemed to fight for hours, but finally I thrust Lord Uttermore so violently against one of the plate glass windows that it broke. He balanced a moment, screamed and fell. At the same moment Iphigenia, shutting her eyes, discharged one of the sten guns. There was a terrific explosion and I knew no more.

The Darkness Ends

When I became conscious I was in hospital. Paul and Iphigenia were bending over me, and the young man's brow was as clear as ivory. All the smog had gone.

"Luckily," said my daughter, "I found the right lever for putting the rocket in reverse. But what," she added with a touch of contrition, "can have happened to Lord Uttermore?"

I smiled. "He must be spinning eternally round the Universe, I suppose."

"Poor man."

"I don't feel so certain. He has never had a circulation like that before."

"I toasted last night the memory of Thomas Cubitt, the journeyman carpenter . . . Cubitt was a genius—I can think of only two other men who made such a difference to London. They were Wren and Nash. But Cubitt died a millionaire when a million was lot of money . . ."

William Hickey, Daily Express

Silly as it sounds.



Loved and Lost

"GENUINE MINIATURES by artist. Likeness guaranteed. (Answers to previous advertisement destroyed accidentally.)—Write Box—, The Times, E.C.A."

THEY wanted miniatures, similitudes
In little, but were foiled of their desire,
Some being saddled with enormous nudes,
Some with symbolic shapes in soldered wire.
Some stipulated smallness as a must,
Only to find the enterprise entail
A nine-foot canvas or a marble bust
Consigned to them by rail.

They wanted artist's work. They were not snobs,
But did not want to find the money when
The portraits had, though lovely little jobs,
Been done by barristers or broker's men.
They had to have a likeness: good or bad
Was immaterial if the thing was true.
It might not look like Holbein, but it had
To look like Cousin Hugh.

And here at last was everything they sought,
Real miniatures, four inches at the most,
All done by hand, and yet the likeness caught
Or money back. They rushed to catch the post,
Enclosing detailed notes of eyes and hair,
And faded photos taken by a friend,
And that quick sketch the man did at the fair
That summer at Southend.

Alas for mortal looks, the flesh apart.
Some studio orgy, or the mice that rove
The dusty wainscots of the world of art,
Or some nude model mad to light the stove
Destroyed the record, leaving the unsure
And random witness of the world's report.

For art is long, even in miniature,
But life is very short.

P. M. HUBBARD



POLITICAL



PANTOMIME

Of Gorse : An Incomplete Story

By P*TR*CK H*M*L*T*N

PART ONE—GORSE THE PUBLISHER

MISS ELIZABETH BOOTE, a lady novelist and "student of crime," was all her life what is foolishly called an "omnivorous" reader. She did not, of course, in the literal sense, "devour" books, even those described by reviewers as being "crisp as lettuce," etc.: but the fact remains that she did read a great deal.

One of the main ingredients of her literary diet was a series of novels dealing with a character named Ernest Ralph Gorse.

Though often described as a "very serious criminal," a potential murderer destined to become a "nationally famous figure," etc., etc., Ernest Ralph Gorse had confined himself, in the trilogy about him which had already appeared, to preying upon women by means of trickery, and had not actually killed anyone so far.

Apart from her "professional" concern with Gorse (as a "criminologist"), Elizabeth Boote was especially interested in him because, according to the third volume in the series, she was herself to write his biography at some unspecified time in the future. She was therefore anxious for him to start murdering and be caught and executed as soon as possible, so that she could fulfil her appointed rôle and add to her reputation thereby—to say nothing of earning large sums of money in the process.

It might have come as a severe shock to this vain, foolish, greedy, avaricious, affected, utterly unlovable, and even detestable woman had she known that she was personally acquainted with Gorse, and that he was already planning to defraud—if not actually to murder—her.

II

Unlike his prospective victim, the reddish-haired, reddish-moustached,

slightly-freckled, nasal-voiced, monocle-wearing, car-driving Gorse was not a "great reader," though acquainted superficially with the works of Jeffrey Farnol and P. G. Wodehouse, whose styles he was "wont" (as he would have expressed it) to employ in conversation as well as in letter-writing.

He had not failed, moreover, to learn of the series of books devoted to him, which he had purchased and read without liking at all, since almost every page contained some derogatory reference to himself, his innate vulgarity, "commonness," lack of good taste, etc. Nor had he relished the idea of being written about by Elizabeth Boote—apparently after his death—as "abominable," "odious," and "repulsive," or of being finally "comprehended" and "forgiven" by her.

He had in fact seriously considered murdering her (since it seemed he would have to murder eventually), thus



Eric Burgin

preventing the future biography from being written at all, and putting—as he phrased it in the peculiarly vulgar, debased, capital-letter-studded coinage of his private thoughts—a Whacking Great Spoke in the author's Wheel. But some instinct told him that he would be unable to interfere—at any rate, to such an extent—with the course laid down for him.

Gorse, moreover, was anxious to postpone murdering for as long as he could. Not from any moral scruples—in which, of course, he was entirely lacking—but because murder entailed some sort of punishment or retribution which he was naturally keen to avoid. He therefore contented himself with deciding to "Put the Boote In," and "Make the Old Trout Rue the Day She Was Born."

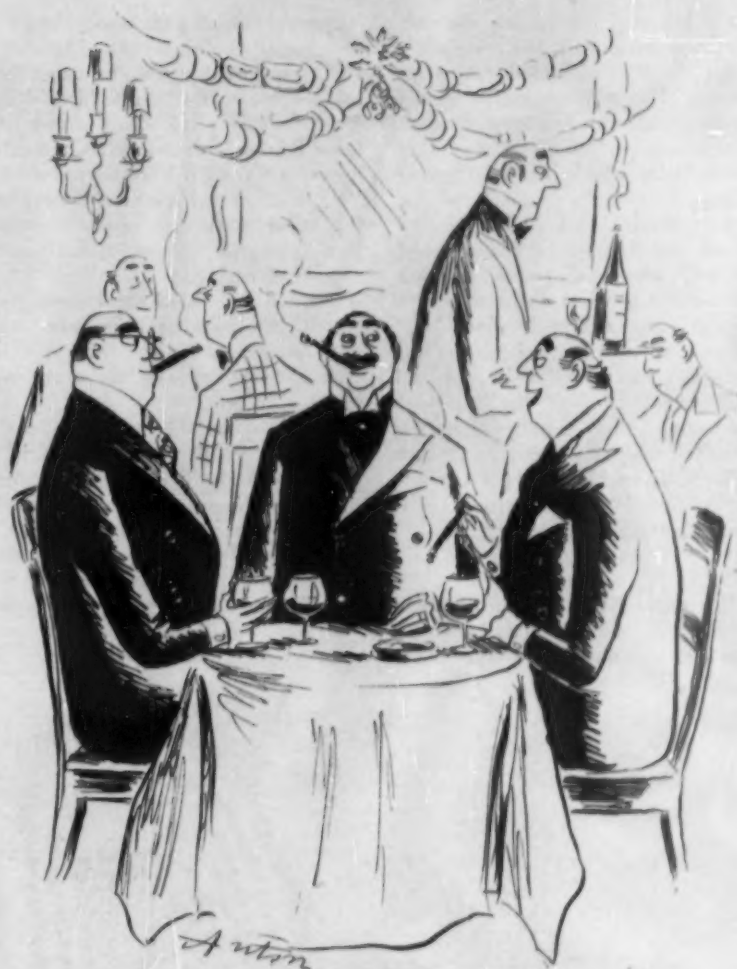
It did not take the astute and purposeful Gorse long to track down the flat-chested, bony, lank-haired, indeterminate-aged female "student of crime" (whose photograph, suitably etherealized, "adorned" the back-jackets of her own "criminological" works), and who combined—as he at once realized—the most nauseatingly foolish characteristics of all the women he had ever victimized, without any of the unhappy Esther Downes' beauty or the endearing simplicity of poor deluded Ivy Barton.

Elizabeth Boote possessed, in addition, an affectedly "arty," pseudo-"Bohemian," pretentious quality that was all her own. She was, of course, addicted to wearing long, trailing, brightly-coloured scarves and "barbaric"-style earrings, and frequently went about in "slacks," especially when "in the house."

Her "house" was, in fact, a mews-flat in the Regent's Park postal district, and—not surprisingly, in view of her complete lack of any physical or mental attractiveness—she lived alone.

III

Having made the acquaintance of Miss Boote in a neighbouring "Coffee house," to which she often "repaired" for a "strong brew" at the end of her "day's labours," Gorse represented himself to her as a publisher. Or rather not as an established publisher but as a young man with money, desirous of starting a publishing house and seeking "Names" to have on his "List."



"How about coming up to my flat for a little game of Monopoly?"

As Gorse was well aware (from gossip overheard in those public houses frequented by the duffle-coated, bitter-drinking know-alls of the literary fringe), the foolish, yet outrageously complacent and rapacious Miss Boote had just quarrelled with her own publishers over the question of a larger "advance"—a frequent cause of dissension between author and publisher. She was therefore "all over" Gorse from the start, recognizing (as was undoubtedly true) that her monocled, red-moustached, faintly-nasal, Bertie-Wooster-resembling *vis-à-vis* was largely ignorant of the type of business in which he proposed to invest and might, if properly "handled," prove to be a "chicken" ready for the "plucking."

Here, of course, she was woefully wrong. In fact—as Gorse in his ostensibly debonair, yet somehow evilly facetious, manner would undoubtedly have said—the Boote was emphatically on the Other Foot.

PART TWO—GORSE THE ACTOR-MANAGER

It has already been suggested that, had those writers who afterwards scoffed at the credulous folly of Gorse's victims been subjected to his wiles themselves, they might well have reacted in very much the same way.

Certainly this was true of Elizabeth Boote, and might also have been true of Gorse's other biographer, G. Hadlow-Browne, had Gorse been able to get

hold of him too: but Hadlow-Browne, fortunately for himself, was "wintering abroad" at the time and therefore out of reach. (This may account for the fact that Hadlow-Browne's attitude towards Gorse was more "humorous" than that of Miss Boote, who had every reason to adopt a "serious" approach to the subject: though—perhaps because she did not care to advertise the extent of her folly—she was careful never to mention her personal connection with the afterwards celebrated criminal.)

Gorse, however, often spoke of his efforts to contact Hadlow-Browne and "sign him up" as one of "his" (Gorse's) prospective authors, thereby stimulating to the full the jealousy and envy which the inwardly mean-spirited (though outwardly "liberal" and "advanced") Miss Boote entertained towards her rivals.

II

The mews-flat in which Elizabeth Boote lived had a "gaily" painted blue door, flanked by window-boxes

containing scarlet geraniums. And on the brightly-polished brass knocker, Gorse—having driven up in one of the rakish sports-cars which he hired daily from a shady second-hand dealer off Great Portland Street—was soon sounding every evening a debonair *rat-tat-tat*. Yet, to a sensitive ear, the rhythm of this knock would have sounded somehow "common"—*nasal*, in fact—even vaguely menacing.

The lank, flat-chested, straggly-haired, bonily-sexless Miss Boote was not, however, sensitive. She was, in fact, foolishly and obtusely insensitive to a high degree.

Inside the flat the most "delicious" dialogues (Miss Boote was obsessively—in fact "deliciously"—fond of this misplaced and outworn adjective, which she pronounced, moreover, in a peculiarly intolerable, lank-haired, and "arty" way) would take place over the peach brandy and strong black coffee "brewed" with the authoress's own "lily-white hands" (which were in

reality sallow, skinny, predacious, and darkly-veined).

These conversations as a rule concerned the Ernest Ralph Gorse novels and the "ultimate fate" reserved for that "fictional personage" (which was "wrapt" so far—as Miss Boote put it with the most hideously foolish and simpering coyness—"in the deepest Mister E.").

"Well—what do you suppose will become of him?" asked Gorse, who disliked intensely being called a Fictional Personage, and concealed his irritation only with the greatest difficulty. "In the end—I mean?"

"Oh—he'll be hanged of course," said Miss Boote firmly.

"Why 'of course'?" said Gorse with unwonted sharpness, for he disliked even more the idea of being hanged.

"Well," said Miss Boote, "murderers usually are—aren't they? At least—such has been my humble experience, anyway."

"I bow to your superior knowledge, gracious lady," Gorse, who really felt more like kicking her, now went all Teutonic, clicking his heels, kissing her hand, and screwing his monocle deeper in a facetiously "Prussian" way. "But Gorse hasn't murdered yet—you know," he added.

"Yes—but he will," said Miss Boote, blissfully and "deliciously" unaware that she might herself be the corpse at any moment. "Besides—it says he'll die painlessly and quickly . . . doesn't it? And hanging's painless and quick—isn't it?"

"Well," said Gorse, "I couldn't say. Never having been hanged—that is."

"Oh—but *everybody* knows that hanging's quite deliciously painless, darling," said Miss Boote. "Besides, Gorse *likes* being tied up and tying other people up—doesn't he? So it's only poetic justice . . . really . . . *n'est-ce pas?*"

"*Pouvait être*," replied the hypocritical Gorse. "Ye say well, and worshipfully, fair maiden—*je* trow."

None the less, had Miss Boote not made that last remark about hanging, he might have let her off more lightly than in fact he did.

III

The resemblance between the reddish-haired, vocally nasal, monocled young "publisher" and her favourite "Fictional Personage" had not escaped Miss Boote,



MOLNAR

who—though inconceivably “dumb” in the colloquial, transatlantic sense—was not actually blind. Gorse, with his usual acumen, had turned this drawback to his own advantage and proposed not only to “sign on” Miss Boote as a partner in the publishing firm (for he needed someone of “experience” to advise him, and she would then be in a position to “put out” large editions of her own books) but to finance a play based on the career of Gorse, to be “adapted” and produced from the novels by his “ladye fayre,” with himself playing the principal part.

To this end he often “rehearsed” in the presence of Miss Boote—bemused for the occasion with copious “libations” of peach brandy, laced on the sly with benzedrine—his “silly ass” act, also taking her, on “free” tickets supposedly supplied by the management, to the “Little Theatre” where this entertainment was, “in the near future,” to be staged.

In fact Gorse handled her as a skilful actor-manager “handles” his cast; and the night came at last when her cheque—converted, at the suggestion of her “knight errant,” into hard, “deliciously” expendable cash—was safely in his pocket and the sash-cord was being wound around her wrists: the “delicate” wrists of a flat-chested, sexlessly-bony, pretentiously-foolish, female “criminologist”—in whose faded eyes fear began eventually to dawn.

PART THREE—GOOD OLD GORSE

I

Those already familiar with the Gorse saga—and particularly with the fate of the wretched but lovable Ivy Barton—will not need to be told of the sickening relish with which the nasal-voiced, slightly-freckled and reddish potential “slayer” revealed his true identity: to the lank and “arty” woman in the news-flat—who, it must be added, took the unwelcome “tidings” considerably less calmly and courageously than her sister-in-misfortune. (It may be because of the memory of her own humiliation that Miss Boote made no reference to the case of Ivy Barton in her biography of Ernest Ralph Gorse.)

She was also made to read aloud not a mere cutting from *The News of the World* but the whole of the three Gorse novels, and to speculate endlessly upon not only the destiny of Gorse himself

(this was turned into a happy and prosperous one, from which hanging was altogether excluded) but upon such minor “Mister E.s” as the fate of Mrs. Plumleigh-Bruce’s liver-coloured spaniel which, last mentioned on page 84 of Volume II, vanished thereafter from the book without explanation from the author.

“Now then,” said Gorse. “Are you going to call me abominable? Or odious? Or repulsive? Eh, you old Boote?”

“No,” gasped Miss Boote, whose voice had by now begun to fail. “No—I’m not . . . as a matter of fact.”

“No,” said Gorse. “Instead, you’re going to call me ‘Good Old Gorse’—understand?”

“Good old Gorse!” quavered Miss Boote obediently.

“Louder,” said Gorse. “Let the jolly old welkins ring,” and added “. . . to Boote.”

Miss Boote was made to repeat



“Good old Gorse,” three more times, after which Gorse gagged her with adhesive tape and drove away in his car, leaving her for the daily woman to find next morning.

II

Miss Boote did not keep her promise, and did in fact use, in her biography, the words “abominable,” “odious,” and “repulsive” instead of the more complimentary “Good Old Gorse.” It says much, however, for her chastened frame of mind that she could also speak of the possibility of eventual forgiveness for her erstwhile tormentor.

Meantime Gorse—who, it will be remarked, had still not murdered anyone—drove on towards the next phase of his criminal career, the Haywards Heath Dentist: and to that “ultimate fate” which will be revealed when the author has finally decided what it is in fact to be.

J. MACLAREN-ROSS



"Crazy modern stuff . . ."

Cartwright and the Need for Sleep

MY husband Cartwright would describe himself as a realist, but he is not above harbouring certain illusions. One of these used to be that he did not snore: or if he did, it was in such a manner no reasonable person could be disturbed by him. In any case there was a cure. He snored only when lying on his back, and, at a request to turn over, would turn over and peace would be restored. There was a time when this was true.

Once, during the war, he had to share a tent on a desert survey with a man called Donaldson. Before they left Cairo I said to Donaldson: "I'm afraid Cartwright snores slightly. He only does it when he's tired, of course, and only when lying on his back. If you say to him 'Turn over, darling,' he'll turn over and be quiet."

"Must it be 'Turn over, darling'?"

By OLIVIA MANNING

"Nothing else is effective."

The next night Donaldson was wakened by Cartwright's snores. Sitting up in bed he commanded: "Turn over."

Cartwright remained flat on his back.

"Turn over, Cartwright."

No move.

Then, reluctantly, in the fiercest tones, Donaldson said: "Turn over, darling," and with the slow, inevitable movement of a wave, Cartwright turned over and slept in silence.

The time came when this formula ceased to be effective. When Cartwright turned there would be a short peace, then the noise would start again. When I could endure it no longer I would wake him up.

"Darling, wake up. You're making a frightful noise."

"Me? Impossible. I was lying on my side."

"That makes no difference nowadays."

"But any doctor will tell you that people can't snore on their sides."

"Well, I should know better. I've been awake since midnight."

"The trouble is, darling, you're becoming neurotic. I wasn't even asleep. I was just lying thinking. I had my eyes open."

"Then you not only snore on your back and on your side, you snore with your eyes open."

"You're being ridiculous. And please don't wake me up again."

One day he discussed the matter with a scientific friend who said he had done research on the problem of snoring. People, he said, snored when lying on their backs because the tongue fell

against the soft palate, causing it to vibrate. He lay on the floor to demonstrate his theory. Cartwright insisted on my watching the performance. The scientific friend, flat on his back, snored furiously, then rolled over on his side and ceased to snore. His tongue, he said, had fallen into its natural position, so snoring became impossible.

"Now are you convinced?" Cartwright asked me.

"Of course I'm not."

"Darling, you're being unreasonable."

Like many people addicted to theory he was badly betrayed by experience. He did not, needless to say, lend himself willingly to experience. The occasion was forced upon him. It happened last year when he was invited by a student body to lecture on Scottish Drama at the Edinburgh Festival. He travelled north with his three fellow lecturers. They arrived to find that owing to Festival overcrowding it had been possible to book only two rooms for the four of them. Each room, however, contained two beds, so no great hardship was imposed on the lecturers. Cartwright was to share with a very large, good-natured man called Peabody, and was pleased rather than not by the prospect. So sociable is his nature that he finds it a strain to suffer even a night in solitude. His only fear was that Peabody would object to his reading in bed. I sometimes objected—usually when, having been too busy to absorb them during the day, he rattled his way through a collection of newspapers.

"I read in bed a bit," said Cartwright; "hope it won't disturb you."

"Nothing disturbs me."

"That's splendid. My wife's rather a light sleeper."

"I sleep like the dead," said Peabody. "I'm off as soon as I put my head on the pillow and I don't wake up till morning."

Another theory held by Cartwright is that human beings need very little sleep. Sleep, he believes, is a superstition of mine. He needs no more than four or five hours. Night was the time when he "caught up with his reading."

Cartwright is a busy man made more busy by the fact he gives so much time to his friends. Before leaving for Edinburgh he had been too busy to make notes for his lectures. He might have

made them on the train, but with three companions willing to listen to him all the way, work would have been a waste of opportunity. He intended settling down to it on arrival, but the others were in jovial mood, inclined towards an evening of good food and drink, and Cartwright was easily persuaded to join them. They were all wine drinkers, but they felt they owed it to Scotland to drink what they kept calling "the wine of the country." They had an evening on whisky, which is generously served in Edinburgh. By the time they reached their rooms Peabody was so drowsy he had to be assisted to bed. He was asleep even before his head touched the pillow.

Cartwright, drowsy or not, had now to apply himself to his lecture notes. He sat up in bed surrounded by books on the Scottish Drama which he had supposed, before this time, to be non-existent. Although he is not a silent man, he likes quiet when he works. He had just uncapped his fountain-pen when Peabody gave a first snore. It was slight and brief. Cartwright ignored it. That, he supposed, was the sort of noise he occasionally made himself. It need disturb no one. The first snore, however, was followed by a much

louder one. Then, as though, after a trial attempt, an engine had got under way, there was a crescendo of snores that ended in a spluttering roar like the bursting of a water-tank. This climax achieved, Peabody set out to achieve it again.

I might find such a noise disturbing, but Cartwright decided he did not. He fixed his eyes on his text-book. He was concentrating. Peabody repeated the water-tank theme a dozen times before Cartwright realized he was unable to understand a word he read. He looked appealingly at Peabody, then remembered that people snored only when on their backs. Peabody was flat on his back. He must be turned upon his side.

Cartwright ordered him: "Turn over, Peabody."

Peabody did not move.

"Turn over, darling."

This famous formula had no effect on Peabody. He was an unmarried man. Cartwright decided to move him by force. He rose and started tugging and pushing at Peabody. Cartwright is a big man, but Peabody was much bigger. He was a dead weight. At last Peabody was moved on to his side, but as soon as he was left unsupported he slid round



Morrison

again on to his back. This happened half a dozen times.

There was only one pillow on each bed. Cartwright realized he must sacrifice his as a prop for Peabody. When he wedged it in, Peabody's vast body remained on its side.

Cartwright returned to bed to work. He had read half a dozen lines when Peabody spluttered slightly, then gave a preliminary snore. Cartwright could not believe his ears. Peabody snored again, then settled to a new theme, a rhythmic trumpeting on a deep note. Cartwright gazed at him. It was true—Peabody was lying on his side and snoring. After some moments he decided the trouble was he had put Peabody on the wrong side.

He rose again, then, tugging and pushing, rolled Peabody on to the other side and wedged the pillow back again. Now he would have peace in which to work.

Peabody, perhaps disturbed by the experience, remained silent slightly longer than before. Cartwright was just congratulating himself on having achieved quiet when Peabody snored. Not possible. Cartwright's heart sank. He paused in apprehension. Soon Peabody's snores were rising again to full blast. It was as though a procession of elephants, emerging from jungle into sunlight, trumpeted in turn. It was a monotonous procession bringing not even the relief of an exploding water-tank.

Cartwright had to admit that people did snore on their sides. This extension of knowledge brought no comfort. Still, it was not Peabody's fault. Anyone might snore. The reasonable listener

did not permit himself to be disturbed by such a trifle. Cartwright kept his eyes on his book and again told himself he was concentrating on his work. But he was not. When he was not listening to Peabody he was fabricating excuses for Peabody or telling himself that he had, after all, chosen to work at night. Anyone else would be asleep. At the thought of sleep he realized how tired he was. He had travelled that day from London to Edinburgh. He had dined well and drunk deeply. He had a heavy day's talking behind him. He realized that human beings did, after all, need some sleep. He needed it now.

He decided to leave Scottish Drama until the morning. He turned off the light and settled down to sleep. But he could not sleep. The snores vibrated through his head. As sleep overcame him a roar would buffet him back to wakefulness. He was in the midst of telling himself he could not blame Peabody—when the benignity of his nature suddenly collapsed beneath him. He fell into fury. He sat up and put on the light. He shouted: "Peabody, for heaven's sake, shut up!"

The shout seemed to stun Peabody. He was silent for a full minute then, grunting and spluttering, he recovered himself. He struggled round as though against fearful odds then, lying spread-eagled on Cartwright's pillow, he started out again upon the water-tank theme.

Cartwright, seldom made angry, can, on rare occasions, touch upon frenzy. He touched upon it now. He picked up one of his shoes and bounced it upon Peabody's belly, shouting: "Shut up! Shut up! Shut up!" The shoe caused no more than a moment's hiatus in sound. The second shoe did not even do that.

Cartwright opened his book again. He read one paragraph half a dozen times. He could make nothing of it. Somewhere a clock struck three. He had made one lecture note: "Where's your Wullie Shakespeare now?" What the answer was he neither knew nor cared. He wanted only to sleep.

At four o'clock he decided he could bear the water-tank theme no longer. He rose and crossed to the other bed. Standing there he snarled: "Peabody, I hate you!" Then he set about turning Peabody back on to his side. When he again held his pillow in his hand he was

filled with a wild, exultant desire to smother Peabody's snores beneath it. Overcoming this, he wedged it behind the body again and stood and listened until Peabody was well back into the elephant theme. He said: "Peabody, I could murder you."

Back in bed, Cartwright began to shiver with weariness and frustration. He put out the light and tried again to sleep. He covered his ears with his hands. They did no more than take the edge off the noise. After an hour or two he shouted: "For goodness' sake, Peabody, shut up!"

At intervals, to relieve his almost unendurable exasperation, he bawled out: "Wake up, Peabody, or I shall wring your neck," or "... fling you out of bed," or "... brain you with the electric fire."

Peabody slept, sublimely unaware of these dangers.

Some time after dawn exhaustion overcame Cartwright's senses so that the snoring came to him as no more than an attendant of dreams. Sometimes it seemed the rhythm of the "Flying Scotsman," sometimes the engine of a ship, sometimes the ruthless hammer-blows of a man driven to exterminate his tormentor.

A cheerful Scottish voice broke in on all this to say: "Come along, now, sir. You wanted to be wakened at eight o'clock sharp."

Cartwright struggled up in bed and took his breakfast tray on his knee. He was due in the lecture room at nine-thirty. He might, if he ate and dressed hurriedly, have half an hour to give to Scottish Drama.

He was in a stupor. The wardrobe looking-glass showed him his face, drawn, ghastly, moist-looking, the eyes rimmed with red and oozing tears. He could not keep from yawning. He looked at his breakfast with disgust.

Sitting up in the other bed, Peabody was aglow with health and eating with appetite. He met Cartwright's glance with a coy smile.

Cartwright, who had had it in mind to make some wryly humorous reference to his disturbed night, now decided to say nothing. What was past, was past. He simply said "Hope you slept well?"

Peabody's coy smile grew more coy. "I hardly like to mention it," he said, "but—you know what, Cartwright? You talk in your sleep."



"Ah, well—back to the old wage claim."



Ennui

In the City

The Boss Goes West

ORGANIZED labour is often hammered in this column for its refusal to relinquish its old defensive dogma and adopt a *modus vivendi* more in keeping with our expanding economy. The unions have long memories and their pattern of behaviour is still determined by fears of slump and unemployment. They are isolationists who believe that they can barricade themselves against unpleasant economic realities. It is a hopeless creed.

But knowledgeable visitors to this country do not confine their criticism

to labour: they are much more disturbed by the apathy and smugness of British industrial management. Our boards of directors have a ready excuse for every setback. Hear them at the airport, answering a typical B.B.C. questionnaire. "Is it true that we are losing markets to the Germans, Italians and Japs?" "Certainly not! There has been a temporary and very minor cancellation of orders, but that can easily be explained. Foreign manufacturers are receiving substantial government subsidies on exports, and foreign wage-rates are much lower than ours."

"Can we cut our costs sufficiently to regain these markets?" "Certainly we can. But we cannot hope to export successfully unless we are encouraged to produce in bulk. We need guaranteed home markets." "Don't you have them?" "No, the Government allows certain foreign goods to be imported at cut-throat prices; moreover it has recently tried to cut domestic spending by restricting credit, increasing purchase tax and making hire-purchase terms more tough." "But that should leave you with more goods to export!" "You don't understand: in the United States exports are goods surplus to home requirements—the Yanks can sell cheaply abroad only because they manufacture to meet a colossal home demand." "What about Germany and Italy and Japan?" "Sweated labour." "I'm told that the Volkswagen is knocking British cars off the roads of Europe—why?" "Because it's cheap, easy on petrol, simple to drive; but our cars are very much better jobs in every



Sir John Braithwaite,
Chairman, Council
of the Stock
Exchange

way." "But too dear?" "Perhaps so: if the foreigners would only pay their workers decent wages they'd be able to afford British cars."

"How do our salesmen compare with those of other countries?" "Our salesmen are the best in the world." "How about the British worker?" "The British worker or craftsman is unbeatable, untouchable."

Excuses, restrictive practices—and—far more dangerous—complacency. The long years of controls and rationing drained British industry of the red corpuscles of competition. For a decade profits were made easily, without any marked display of enterprise. During the war and the Socialist spree, profits were under a cloud. They were regarded as turpious, mulctuary. They were tolerated, but only on condition that they remained decently indecent. And now that controls and totalitarian economics have disappeared the atmosphere they created lingers on.

Our predominantly capitalist society—in which profits, earned under conditions of free competition, remain the only test of industrial efficiency—still recoils from the idea of breaking the bank. If ten per cent is considered a respectable measure of profitability, ten per cent is the target, and perceptive shareholders who feel that profits of twenty and thirty per cent are within the grasp of the business are branded as rascally and interfering hotheads. If—through some carelessness on the part of

the directors, production staff or auditors—the rate of profit climbs above the consecrated optimum, then the shameful surplus is ploughed back, devoted to some scheme of betterment or expansion which may or may not be justified by the firm's or the industry's real prospects. And if some poor twisted boy with a nose for pecuniary gain decides that he could revitalize the property, put it to work more effectively and pull down higher profits, he is cold-shouldered as an avaricious, anti-social busybody—a scoundrel dealing in take-over bids.

Where does the blame lie? To some extent with our system of taxation.

Since the war industry has been raided by income tax, the profits tax, levies of all kinds, and the so-called excess profits tax (the derogatory implications are obvious), and to-day, with income tax at 8s. 6d. in the £ and the profits tax at 27½ per cent, the Exchequer annexes something like forty per cent of all profits declared and seventy per cent of all profits distributed. The disincentive effect of such punitive rates is obvious. The firm that plods along, winning a small "reasonable" return on its unambitious efforts, has less worry and fewer detractors than the go-ahead enterprise with an expanding tax account.

Management too must take its share of criticism. The men who control the industrial programme of this country are no longer drawn exclusively from the wealthy, proprietorial class. The redistribution of income has resulted in a redistribution of capital, so that industrial shares are now held more widely and more thinly than ever before. Shareholders used to have the leisure and inclination to lap up sustenance and gossip in the coffee-houses, attend company meetings and make their presence felt: now most of them are working men lacking the time and the incentive (their vested interest in any one company is usually small) to busy themselves with complicated matters of business policy.

The result is that managements are left largely to their own devices, which means that they are free to exercise their bureaucratic talents. They are answerable in a vague way to a shifting, intangible list of names entered in the register of shareholders, and the shareholders make no fuss as a rule if the business continues to tick over. So profits are ploughed back when they should be paid out, ploughed back in the interests of the management, and at the expense of the shareholders.

Then there are the restrictive practices, which come in a hundred and one varieties. For the present, however, we can safely leave them to the tender mercies of the Monopolies Commission.



Mr. Cameron
Cobbold, Governor of
Bank of England



Lord Chandos,
Chairman, Associated
Electrical
Industries Ltd.

MAMMON



BOOKING OFFICE

Among those Published

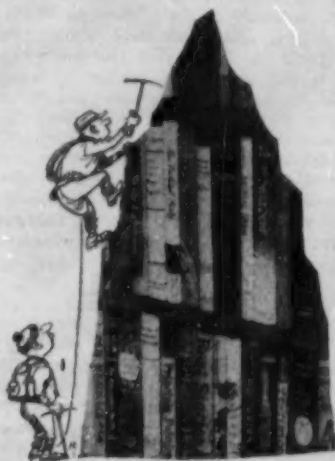
IN any selection of the year's books some good books are bound to get overlooked while bad ones float to the top. Turning over the *Punch* reviews for this year, I first listed a number I had either read and enjoyed or could imagine reading and enjoying, plus some that were so obvious it did not matter whether anyone enjoyed them or not. I then realized that a thick mass of names would be repellent and slashed my list savagely. It is only intended as a fag-end-of-the-year, rough-and-ready, unpontifical, apologetically indefensible selection of books of which some readers might care to be reminded. The choice is not, I regret to say, influenced by bribery.

There have been collected editions of the poetry of Stephen Spender, Wallace Stevens, Dorothy Wellesley and William Empson. There is an edition of Yeats's *Autobiographies* and one of his *Letters*. Peter Quennell's *Baudelaire and the Symbolists* and Stephen Spender's *The Making of a Poet* seem to fall naturally here. This section also includes *The Private Diaries of Stendhal*, edited and translated by Robert Sage, the Phaidon edition of Baudelaire's *Mirror of Art*, Percy Wyndham Lewis's *The Demon of Progress in the Arts* and Lionel Trilling's *The Opposing Self*, a collection of literary criticism *d'occasion*.

For History: the first volume of C. V. Wedgwood's big history of the Civil War, *The King's Peace*, Guy Chapman's *The Dreyfus Case*, W. G. Hoskin's *The Making of the English Landscape*, Francis Askham's *The Gay Delavals*, Sir Lewis Namier's *Personalities and Powers* and Garrett Mattingly's *Renaissance Diplomacy*.

The transition to Biography can be neatly made with A. J. P. Taylor's *Bismarck*, which leads on to *Apes, Angels and Victorians*, William Irvine's joint biography of Darwin and Huxley, *The Unknown Prime Minister*, which, as all readers of the *Evening Standard* will have learnt, is Robert Blake's life of Bonar Law, J. C. Trewin's *Mr. Macready*, Julian Symons's *Horatio*

Bottomley, John Evelyn Wrench's *Geoffrey Dawson and Our Times*, James Pope-Hennessy's *Lord Crewe*, R. W. Ketton-Cremer's *Thomas Gray* and Robert Baldick's *Life of J. K. Huysmans*. Also: *Lawrence of Arabia* by Richard Aldington, *The Fabulous Leonard Jerome* by Anita Leslie, *Still Are Thy Pleasant Voices*, J. B. Morton's book on Belloc, *Elinor Glyn* by Anthony Glyn, and *Peggy Ashcroft* by Eric Keown.



Autobiographies range from the inspiring, like Sir Edmund Hillary's *High Adventure* and Roger Bannister's *The First Four Minutes*, to the frivolous, like Yolande Donlan's *Sand in My Mink*, Nina Hammett's *Is She a Lady?* and Elsa Maxwell's *I Married the World*. General de Gaulle's first volume appeared in French as *L'Appel* and later in English as *The Call to Honour*. The war was described from a very different point of view in John Verney's wryly light-hearted *Going to the Wars*. The inter-war period is recalled by T. E. Lawrence's long-awaited and rather disappointing account of the R.A.F., *The Mint*. S. N. Behrman's *The Worcester Account*, L. E. Jones's *A Victorian Boyhood* and Richard Church's *Over the Bridge* describe early experience. David Garnett has produced the second volume of his autobiography, *The Flowers of the Forest*.



Other accounts of their lives by the already established are *The Whispering Gallery* by John Lehmann, *Surprised by Joy* by C. S. Lewis, *Said and Done* by O. G. S. Crawford, and *The World that Fred Made* by Bernard Darwin. *The Dog at Clambercross* is another of Jocelyn Brooke's experiments in "shaped" autobiography. *Boswell on the Grand Tour* is its indescribable self. Alberto Denti di Pirajino's *A Cure for Serpents* is an entertaining oddity about medicine in Italian colonies. Esther Warner's *Trial by Sassafras* is a strange account of a journey to investigate the African beliefs that affected one of the writer's servants. Travel includes Laurie Lee's *A Rose for Winter* (Spain), Patrick Anderson's *Snake Wine* (Malaya), Peter Mayne's *The Narrow Smile* (Pathan country) and Raymond Maufrais's *Matto Grosso Adventure* (South America).

Fiction is simply an overwhelming flood. Proust: *Jean Santeuil*. Joyce Cary: *Not Honour More*. I. Compton-Burnett: *Mother and Son*. Elizabeth Bowen: *A World of Love*. Anthony Powell: *The Acceptance World*. Graham Greene: *Loser Takes All* and *The Quiet American*. C. S. Forester: *The Good Shepherd*. Phyllis Bentley: *Noble in Reason*. John Steinbeck: *Sweet Thursday*. Evelyn Waugh: *Officers and Gentlemen*. William Faulkner: *A Fable*. Aldous Huxley: *The Genius and the Goddess*. Nigel Balchin: *The Fall of the Sparrow*. L. P. Hartley: *A Perfect Woman*. R. C. Hutchinson: *The Stepmother*. François Mauriac: *The Lamb*. Thomas Mann: *Confessions of Felix Krull*. Alberto Moravia: *A Ghost at Noon*.

Peter Towry: *Lord Minimus*. Peter de Vries: *The Tunnel of Love*. Nigel Dennis: *Cards of Identity* (you will either delight in it or dismiss it as highbrow, unintelligible and pretentious). P. H. Newby: *The Picnic at Sakkarra*. Marguerite Yourcenar: *The Memoirs of Hadrian*. David Karp: *The Day of the Monkey*. Kingsley Amis: *That Uncertain Feeling*. John Wain: *Living in the Present*. Robert Kee: *A Sign of the Times*. William Golding: *The Inheritors*. Herman Wouk: *Marjorie*

Morningstar. Gabriel Chevallier: *Clochemerle-Babylon*. John Lodwick: *The Starless Night*.

A few "entertainments": *Fellow Passenger* by Geoffrey Household. *Exit Charlie* by Alex Atkinson. *The Beckoning Lady* by Margery Allingham. *The Man Who Didn't Fly* by Margot Bennett. *Overdraft on Glory* by James Helvick. *First Train to Babylon* by Max Ehrlich. *The Woman on the Roof* by Helen Nielsen.

Lastly, a few that are unclassifiable. Kenneth Tynan's *Bull Fever*. Rebecca West's *A Train of Powder*. Harold Nicolson's *Good Behaviour* and Laurens van der Post's *The Dark Eye in Africa*. E. and O.E. R. G. G. PRICE

English Drawing. Geoffrey Grigson. *Thames and Hudson*, 30/-

The notion of a collection of about one hundred and fifty drawings chosen by Mr. Geoffrey Grigson immediately excites one's interest. It is not disappointed in this volume. Mr. Grigson's cantankerous but unconventional and enthusiastic mind is just the thing to give a jolt to the subject of English drawing, which, with all its notable exponents, is apt to get pushed away into the by-paths of art criticism. Here we have a survey from Samuel Cooper to that admirable artist, Gwen John; and a very interesting and stimulating one it is.

It is excellent that attention should be focused on an eighteenth-century draughtsman like Vanderbank, whose "Horse and Horseman" here is particularly attractive. It was also a good idea to show that Gerard Manley Hopkins was a considerable draughtsman and art critic as well as poet. Mr. Grigson, in his introduction, emphasizes the debt we owe to the French Protestants, who, emigrating to this country after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685, established a society of artists and craftsmen in London which was of great importance in helping to develop the existing national style, both in drawing and the other arts. What about another collection from 1900 to the present day, chosen by the same hand?

A. P.

Escort: The Battle of the Atlantic. Commander D. A. Rayner. *Kimber*, 16/-

Rear-Admiral Chalmers in his book *Max Horton and the Western Approaches* tells how Admiral Horton, on hauling down his flag as Commander-in-Chief Western Approaches, paid tribute to the R.N.V.R. This book is written by the first R.N.V.R. in the history of the Royal Navy to command a destroyer. Commander Rayner served for five years continuously at sea (the last two in Admiral Horton's command) graduating from the command of a trawler to a large destroyer by way of a corvette and a small destroyer.

This contribution to the story of the Royal Navy during the last war, written as an autobiography, deals with "ships

and men both of whom have character," not with "the sea which has no personality of its own and does not change. The sea is neither cruel nor kind. It is supremely indifferent." No reader of this book, in which there are numerous light-hearted incidents not always approved of by the senior officers, can doubt the author's love of ships.

A. V.

Reunion. Merle Miller. *Heinemann*, 18/-

If you are a British fiction-reader in the 1950s you will have met up with any number of these novels. They are imported from the U.S.A., and written in a style so simple and unaffected that they might all be the work of one single guy who has read Hemingway and Steinbeck and John O'Hara, and then maybe worked on some newspaper and certainly done *Time*. The novels have much dialogue and detail and a great many minor characters whose backgrounds are all packed in solid and varied—a real cross-section of the American W.O.L.; and you can read here about eight veterans of World War II—one a crazy loon with a gun who figures he is dead and aims to make some other jerk dead, right there at the reunion—and their wives and girl-friends (with much "I love you," said mostly kind of quiet), who do not get together for close on three hundred pages, with another hundred to go and thirty-three even after the shots get fired; and pal, you got our sympathy.

J. M.-R.

The World of Dew. D. J. Enright. *Secker and Warburg*, 18/-

After eighteen months of teaching in a Japanese University the author became sufficiently irritated by foreign books on Japan to try one of his own. The result is patchy, but the best bits make it well worth reading. A journal, or documentary fiction like his Egyptian

Academic Year, might have suited him better. He is best when he starts from his students. Both the strength of traditional conditioning and the disastrously narrow approach to Western culture are illustrated by their sad attempts to reproduce "correctly" the pessimism of early Eliot, Graham Greene and Sartre and the critical complexity of Empson.

In his efforts to escape from both Lafcadio Hearn and anti-Americanism, Mr. Enright is not always clear about the standards by which he is judging both the actualities and the potentialities of Japanese civilization. He does not make one want to live in Japan, still less to lecture in it; but he succeeds in making one feel that once inside the country one would soon develop an exasperated affection for it and want to give it helpful shoves.

R. G. G. P.

The Infant with the Globe. Alarcón. *Trionum Press*, 15/-

Though not rivalling the greatest French and English novels, *The Infant with the Globe* is among the best European works of fiction, having the distinction of at once satirizing and conforming to the romantic tradition. Manuel, the hero, with his physical beauty, his almost insane nobility, his misfortunes and his tragic end, is a romantic idea from whom the author cannot always stand apart. Alarcón, however, has a more dispassionate approach to his lesser characters: Don Trinidad, "the mass-and-stewpot priest" who becomes Manuel's guardian, Vitriolo the vicious apothecary, even the heroine, Soledad, the sly beauty whose faithlessness is not satisfactorily justified, are treated with a humour that greatly lightens the book. The whole has a poetic grandeur of form somewhat marred by the anti-climax of the last chapter, justified though this is by the translator Mr. Robert Graves, who tells us that here we have "a novel of romantic passion in which the author has for once not played the reader false at the close, but has come absolutely clean."

O. M.

Scotland under Charles I. David Mathew. *Eyre and Spottiswoode*, 30/-

Archbishop Mathew is both novelist and historian. This deeply learned sequel to his *Age of Charles I* displays subtle insight into motive and character. With easy urbanity, he seems to move as a contemporary among the great Lords of seventeenth-century Scotland.

His portraits of the close, cunning Argyle, of the easy-going Hamilton, of the remote, uncomprehending King are all admirable, and only a master of understatement could remark of the Covenanters that they had "a determined capacity for self-expression." Nor does he neglect the primitive economic background; £400 Scots were worth in England only £33 6s. 8d. His most



"Pst! Votez M.R.P. . . ."

striking figure is Alexander Leslie, Earl of Leven, "perhaps the last condottiere of the grand scale." He was nearly illiterate and insisted on the outlandish title of Excellency, picked up in the Thirty Years War. But the most sympathetic character is Sir Robert Gordon of Gordonstoun, who was all for honest exercise: "golfing, jumping, running, swimming, and suck lyk," if all against the Highland dress, "that uncivil kynd of clothes, such as plaids, mantels, truses and blew bonnets." "Make sewere acts against those that weare them," he wrote, and "eschew the football as a dangerous and unprofitable exercise." J. E. D.

The World that Fred Made. Bernard Darwin. Chatto and Windus, 21/-

Mr. Darwin was born into a distinguished family, with a delightful background that has already produced a classic in Gwen Raverat's *Period Piece*. He moved happily through Eton, Trinity and the Inner Temple to *The Times*. With a slight feeling of having fallen rather below the intellectual level of his family, he has pleasantly spent many years playing golf and writing about golf and re-reading Dickens and eating crumpets and turning over memories of past pleasure. He has given a lot of enjoyment in his life. Younger sports writers are more intellectually curious and more anxious to vary their writing; but pioneers expect to be passed.

Mr. Darwin lives in the sunny past without any note of sourness about the present. Unfortunately he has drawn so much on his memories during his many years of journalism that his autobiography seems limp. I expected to be delighted and was horrified to find myself gently bored. Golf addicts will find a good deal of food for their addiction; but Mr. Darwin has usually managed to interest readers who do not play golf at all. R. G. G. P.

"Alicella": A Memoir of Alice King Stewart and Ella Christie. Averil Stewart. John Murray, 21/-

Two Scottish sisters, born in the 1860s, form the subject of this memoir. Alice Christie, married at seventeen to Robert Stewart of Murdostoun Castle, had to confine her abundant energies to organizing all Lanarkshire, but Ella became an indomitable traveller. Even in that era of intrepid spinsters her journeys into Central Asia were remarkable.

Unfortunately the sisters were conversationalists rather than writers. Their voluminous correspondence is not very rewarding, though students of U and Non-U will be intrigued by Lady Stewart stating, in 1910, that fish-knives were out of date. Nothing could be duller than their exchanges with Andrew Lang. But, through the French phrases and the preoccupation with charity bazaars, two obviously spirited

personalities do emerge. For instance, when their father left everything to an orphanage they disputed his will, against everyone's advice, and soon had the orphanage squealing for mercy. The solid, forty-year-old figure of Ella, depositing a weeping lady's maid in Kashmir and setting out in topee and spine-protector for Tibet, reminds us that their generation was, in many ways, tougher than ours. J. M.



IN THE PRESS

Astonishing Stimulants

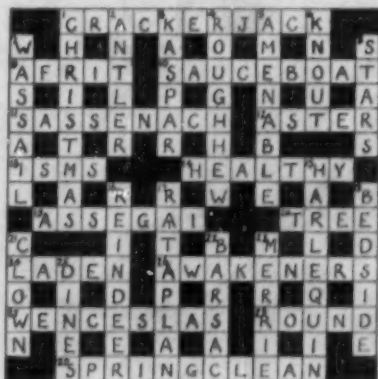
LORD BEAVERBROOK's vehicle, the *Daily Express*, would rust and run down without him. It has no second driver, and at times Lord Beaverbrook shows signs of being tired.

In the race for circulation the *Express* has been decisively beaten by the *Mirror*. In the race of great events at the end of the year it was beaten to Clarence House, to Burgess and Maclean, to the possibilities of corruption in the London police. Now it has been pushed into the pits, in the public's eye, by the *Daily Mail*.

Offering £21,000 in a Christmas competition, the *Mail* announced "Over-night another newspaper imitated us and announced a competition with prize money of £20,000. Imitation is permissible and sometimes flattering. But . . . the *Daily Mail* will continue to offer £1,000 more than any other competitive newspaper . . ."

In the past Lord Beaverbrook would have sold the *Evening Standard* for prize money rather than refuse such a challenge. But when the bidding rose, when the *Mail* offered £26,000, the *Express* gave up at £25,000 and "a mystery prize."

Significantly, the *Express* Christmas competition was billed as "an astonishing stimulant to road safety." In the old days the *Express* led the race and to hell with pedestrians.



Solution to last week's Christmas crossword.

The old bold *Express* even ran a Dig for Victory contest in 1939.

This year your Christmas tables will be full of food. Ham and bacon-and-eggs, fresh vegetables—the normal trimmings to your turkey—are available.

Be thankful but make a resolution to see that the position is the same next Christmas and every Christmas after. The most victorious amateur gardener was rewarded.

Once the *Express* exulted "We set the pace—the others follow." In one of their slower post-war competitions a new slogan was sought. The competitor who suggested "For tenacity, veracity, perspicacity—*Daily Express*" had to be quietened with £500.

Other newspapers now provide the more astonishing stimulants. The *Daily Mail* pays people to swim the Channel. In winter-time the *Sunday Dispatch* corners bathing beauties and persuades them to turn to Mecca Dancing Ltd. and pray. The *Daily Sketch* promotes a teen-age model contest and promises the winner "the prospect of a successful career." A Tonypandy foreman baker says that the *Sketch* is "the fastest filly in Fleet Street" and wins a racehorse. Even the *News Chronicle*, aware that its readers become socially conscious beyond Calais, send competition winners to Moscow.

How strange that the *Express*'s greatest annual contest should be held at Silverstone. MARSHALL PUGH



AT THE PLAY

A Girl Called Jo (PICCADILLY)
Listen to the Wind (ARTS)

THE theatre is full of surprises, but I never expected to find a first night audience fanned into a glow of ecstatic reminiscence by the thought of *Little Women* and *Good Wives*. As we waited for the last flashlight to pop at the last film starlet to come shrinking into the foyer, the eyes of firm-jawed and prosperous men grew dim as in hushed voices the splendid sacrifice of Jo's hair was recalled, and dowagers carrying the scars of long campaigns on the social battlefield trembled as they spoke of the night in Venice when Laurie and Amy found each other. There were, however, one or two of us with the strength of character to confess that LOUIBA ALCOTT was only a name; and it seemed to me that in the end *A Girl Called Jo* must be judged by such as us, for the supply of ALCOTT fanatics could scarcely fill the Piccadilly.

For the non-devotee this musical goes on too long, and so faithfully records the adventures of the March family that it raises fears that it might go on for ever. We are spared nothing, not even the last moments of little Beth, encouraged into the hereafter by her mother's lullaby—a palpable hit below the belt. While a certain mild charm springs from the

innocent aspirations of four fluttering girls, it cannot last for three hours. The adaptors, PETER MYERS, ALEC GRAHAME and DAVID CLIMIE (the team which wrote *Intimacy* at 8.30) appear to have had their own doubts, for when Amy arrives in Venice VIRGINIA VERNON sheds her crinoline and bloomers to join, very nimbly, in a series of ballets describing the melodramatic life of Europe. It is good dancing, but it has no more relevance to the story than a troupe of seals playing basket-ball.

More stringent comedy was surely needed. This is not to blame JOAN HEAL, who does very well as the tomboy, Jo, but her satiric talent is constantly being watered down by romance and sentiment. One has no grumble with the cast; MARION GRIMALDI is a delightful Meg, and DENIS QUILLEY just the sort of boy-next-door to make maiden hearts beat faster. Nor with HUTCHINSON SCOTT's dresses which are remarkably lavish and pretty for a family with nothing in the till. The music didn't strike me as exciting, but my main objection to it was its sheer noise, drowning the words of the lyrics. It is high time all the lyric writers in the world got together and formed a cast-iron union to insist that the job of orchestras is to accompany, and not to swamp.

If this gently lingering entertainment had been presented more sharply and briefly, the undoubted taste with which it has been assembled would have made more impression. But if your nursery régime included regular doses of *La Alcott* you may like it as it is.

At the Arts the attraction of VIVIAN ELLIS's gay music is not diminished by the orchestra's respect for the lyrics of *Listen to the Wind*, a Christmas play which had a great success at the Oxford Playhouse last year and which deserves to join the regulars in London. Admittedly it is an odd mixture, for although aimed mainly at children, and written by ANGELA AINLEY JEANS with suitable propriety, it contains a memorable excursion into broad cabaret, when MIRIAM KARLIN, in her fruitiest *Women of Twilight* accents, stops the show with the confessions of a mermaid demoted to a mere sea witch, the distinction being pretty clearly that between an amateur and a professional status. But this interlude seemed to go just as well with the children as with the grown-ups, and I imagine for quite different reasons. *Listen to the Wind* is unsugared, original, adventurous and produced by PETER HALL on the little Arts stage with unfailing attention to the eye. Its background is a

prim Victorian nursery, but what with a gipsy butler and a magic bird-cage kidnapping is easy, and so is a visa to the Palace of the Wind, where meteorology at last makes sense, and where the children's grandmother, a well known figure in East Anglia, turns out to be a frequent visitor. NORA NICHOLSON is perfectly cast as this surprising lady, and the children are very well played by MARGARET McCOURT, MAVIS SAGE and RICHARD PALMER. Loud hurrahs for RODERICK's *Cook's Gale-Bird* (the children's private airliner) and for DISLEY JONES's enchanting sets and dresses. The wit is punny but the humour robust enough for all ages.

Recommended

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

Henry V (Old Vic—21/12/55), with RICHARD BURTON. *The Queen and the Rebels* (Haymarket—2/11/55), in which IRENE WORTH acts superbly. And *Morning's at Seven* (Comedy—21/12/55), a quietly amusing study of an odd American family. ERIC KEOWN

AT THE OPERA



La Bohème (COVENT GARDEN)

COMING to London with only twenty operas in his knapsack, RAFAEL KUBELIK, pre-eminently a concert-hall man, is still on the proving ground at Covent Garden, although musical director there. We went to his first *Bohème* and sat with cupped chins, staring sternly over our spectacle tops, like judges at a competitive festival. Down in the pit Mr. KUBELIK leaped and bounced and flung his arms elegantly aloft on cues. Good to look at. And, in the main, good to hear. The man so burns with musicianship that warmth begins to trickle and spread comfortably, as through a wintry old house when the plumbers have been purposeful at last about the hot water pipes.

Twice he turned the orchestral taps full on at debatable points, swamping even the full-throated and very sweet Mimi, ELSIE MORISON. Wherever you have passion there are sure to be casualties. Mr. KUBELIK seems as passionate about Puccini as he is about Janacek. Splendid. I know several symphony conductors who would turn red and run like hares to avoid contamination if they as much as saw Puccini on the other side of the street.

Two points about the winter morning scene at the *Barrière d'Enfer*. (1) From where I sat the opening pages—which are not only text-book score but part of one's very life-fibre—were hopelessly unbalanced in favour of the harp, almost a harp solo, in fact. (2) At last I have heard the whip-crack chords which end this Act. The intrusive applause which usually smothered them was held off by as exquisitely-timed and manipulated a slow curtain as I have ever seen. Otherwise the production is



Laurie—DENIS QUILLEY

Jo—JOAN HEAL

La Girl Called Jo

becoming stale and vestigial. In the attic scene years ago Marcel used to climb a decorator's ladder and hold a bucket under a ceiling leak. This was the Garden's laborious way of rubbing in 1830 Bohemianism. Since then the leak has been stopped. Marcel does not have to climb any more. But the decorator's ladder surrealistically remains. Has Marcel been ordering new wallpaper? Scratch a Bohemian and you'll always find a bourgeois.

In the case of the new Musetta, ADÈLE LEIGH, no scratching was necessary. At its best Miss LEIGH's voice has a pearly, fragile innocence. What has this to do with the Waltz Song? People were saying her acting, at any rate, was good. To me her goings-on outside the Café Momus suggested that Sandy Wilson's Madcap Maisie was giving old Alcindoro capricious hell on a "dare" from her form-mates at Cheltenham Ladies' College. All this is no fault of Miss LEIGH. The truth is that she was woefully miscast.

CHARLES REID



AT THE PICTURES

Richard III—The Big Knife

THE ease with which some writers have been able to decide that *Richard III* (Director: LAURENCE OLIVIER) is the best of Sir LAURENCE's three Shakespeare films surprises me. With longer to think about it than they had, I still find the problem of the order of merit too difficult for a definite answer—bearing in mind everything that should be borne in mind. The most cogent point is the difference in stature between the original plays. Of course it is arguable that *Richard III* makes a better film for exactly the reasons that make it the least important of the three plays, but I don't think that would be a very rewarding line of criticism.

It is anyway a very good, entertaining and visually pleasing film, and the only thing is to try to distribute the credit in the right proportions. SHAKESPEARE can perhaps get along without any pats on the back from me; this leaves the "interpolations" by DAVID GARRICK, COLLEY CIBBER, etc., mentioned in a foreword, the production design (ROGER FURSE) and art direction (CARMEN DILLON), the fresh and imaginative Technicolor and VistaVision camera-work (OTTO HELLER), Sir WILLIAM

WALTON's music, and the playing of a fabulously distinguished cast, led by Sir LAURENCE, as directed by himself.

Much of the comment has concerned itself with the editing and textual alterations, but I say what I always say about this question: a film is a film to be judged on its merits, without reference to the original story, play or whatever on which it is based. To take an obvious illustration: some of the finest and most celebrated Shakespeare speeches are essentially pictorial, designed to conjure up a scene that the stage could not show—but since a film can show it, and often most beautifully, it would be sheer irritating over-emphasis to use the speech as well.

The two things about the picture that for me are outstandingly memorable are—almost equally—its visual style and Sir LAURENCE's performance. At every moment one is reminded of fifteenth- and sixteenth-century paintings; and in interior scenes a characteristic and most effective device is a turning aside of the camera from a speaker in the foreground to show a vista, perhaps through a window in the castle, wherein little figures, just not too distant to be heard, are saying something that gives the foreground speech an ironical point. And irony is basic in the part of Richard: with a comedian's timing, Sir LAURENCE strengthens the force of his villainy by giving innumerable speeches and scenes an uneasily comic overtone.

Impossible to mention half the ingenious touches of detail that catch one's attention in every scene. Let one of the least subtle represent them all—the crown, rolling and bouncing among the horses' hoofs after the battle of Bosworth.

Of the other new films this week WALT DISNEY's *Davy Crockett* will, to be sure, get the biggest public and be most widely heard of and enjoyed, particularly by the young; but far more interesting in all sorts of ways to an adult mind is *The Big Knife* (Director: ROBERT ALDRICH). This is an adaptation of a play about Hollywood, by CLIFFORD ODETS, and I found it absorbing. I like to think this was because of the way it was written and made and not because of the melodramatic basis of the story.

The central character is a Hollywood star (JACK PALANCE) not as tough as he looks; the villain is a soapy megalomaniac producer (first-rate performance by ROD STEIGER) determined to make him sign another contract that will ruin his domestic happiness as well as affronting his aesthetic conscience (I'm not among those who cynically refuse to believe that such a star could have an aesthetic conscience). The final weapon is blackmail and the end is, in the classical sense, tragic—he kills himself. It may sound rather crudely obvious; but in this instance a strongly dramatic theme, entertainingly articulate characters and inventive, diversified use of the familiar



Richard III
LAURENCE OLIVIER

old black-and-white screen combine to make an uncommonly gripping film.

Survey

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

Davy Crockett is candidly a film for boys; what amounts to a mixture of several different kinds of Western, with a few inserted flashes of straightforward animal photography, and a climax at the siege of the Alamo. Simple, obvious values, plenty of open air, and no problem too subtle to be solved by some form of fight. *Les Diaboliques* (14/12/55) and *The Ladykillers* (21/12/55) continue.

New releases include a very enjoyable musical, *It's Always Fair Weather* (26/10/55); *To Catch a Thief* (16/11/55), not the best Hitchcock but a good light thriller; and *Simon and Laura*, a pleasing comedy from ALAN MELVILLE's play.

RICHARD MALLETT

PUNCH INDEX

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ON THE AIR

Tail-piece

AT this season of goodwill I should like to dole out meeds of praise to those who have entertained, uplifted and instructed during 1955: I should also like to revise a number of hasty judgments made in this column and make deep apologetic obeisance to those who have been wrongly pilloried. Greetings and congratulations then to the following:

The Third Programme.—Some time ago, when I was suggesting ways in which the B.B.C. might gird its loins and regroup itself to meet the challenge of independent television, I criticized the Third for its tendency to cater unduly for esoteric minorities, and its failure to lure listeners away from the anodyne drip-drip-drip of Home and Light syrup. I am now much more charitably disposed to the service, and the reason for my change of heart is amazingly simple—merely that I have acquired a radio equipped to receive the V.H.F., F.M. Band. Now all is clear, and I am grateful to the Third for its lavish distribution of good music—madrigals for nose-flute and shawms included. There is still, however, much room for improvement. I hold that the programmes should be baited to attract middle-brow fugitives from the Light, the I.T.A. and B.B.C. Television, and I still feel that most of the talks given are either too long or too specialized for public broadcasting. They would be happier surely in print, in lofty-minded magazines and banking reviews.

B.B.C. Television.—On the whole 1955 has been a good year for Sir George Barnes's lot. All the meatier, the more intelligent programmes—



"Press Conference," "In the News," "Panorama," "The Brains Trust," the documentaries, scientific and arty discussions—have survived; the Eurovision link has been strengthened; parlour games have at last passed their zenith and are on the way out; sporting and outside broadcasts have become more numerous and more reliable; the "News" and "Newsreel," scrappy, uninspired and generally inadequate until the autumn, are at last showing signs of improvement; and the weather men continue to delight with their crisp commentaries.

Humour and variety are still black spots, chiefly because the demand for light entertainment is insatiable while the supply of effective purveyors is meagre. Faced with the eternal problem of getting a quart from a pint pot the B.B.C. now adulterates its provisions with impunity. Any comedian (or comedians; they usually come in pairs) who reveals a touch of originality in his act is promptly signed up for half a dozen appearances.

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Joe Wilkins and Harry Titchmarsh, who over the years have devised a ten-minute routine of acceptable risibility, are pitchforked into an elaborate series billed as "The Harry and Joe Show." And after ten minutes of success they flop like punctured Mae Wests. I am hoping for great things from Max Wall—and fearing the worst.

B.B.C. drama has had its great moments. There have been memorable productions of works by Shakespeare, Shaw, Maugham, Bridie and others, and half a dozen new plays of considerable merit. But the drama department still seems to believe that its policy of presenting as many new plays as possible—whatever their quality—will eventually produce a stream of winners.

Of the popular programmes little need be said. "Ask Pickles," "Off the Record," "The Show Band Show," "Music for You," "More Contrary," "Puzzle Corner," and the rest continue to refresh tired breadwinners and business men, and build spectacular reputations for crooners, compères and gag-men.

Independent Television.—The most interesting conclusion to be drawn from the first three months of commercial TV is that the advertising spots have little impact on stolid British viewers. Nobody enthuses over them, nobody seems to hate their guts, nobody bothers about them. Most of them have been innocuous, a few tasteless, and a handful mildly amusing. The I.T.A. service has widened our knowledge of the transatlantic scene by importing deplorable television films in quantity. It has boosted crooners, comics and American accents, but has contributed little to the art of television.

It has also made me grateful to the B.B.C. BERNARD HOLLOWOOD



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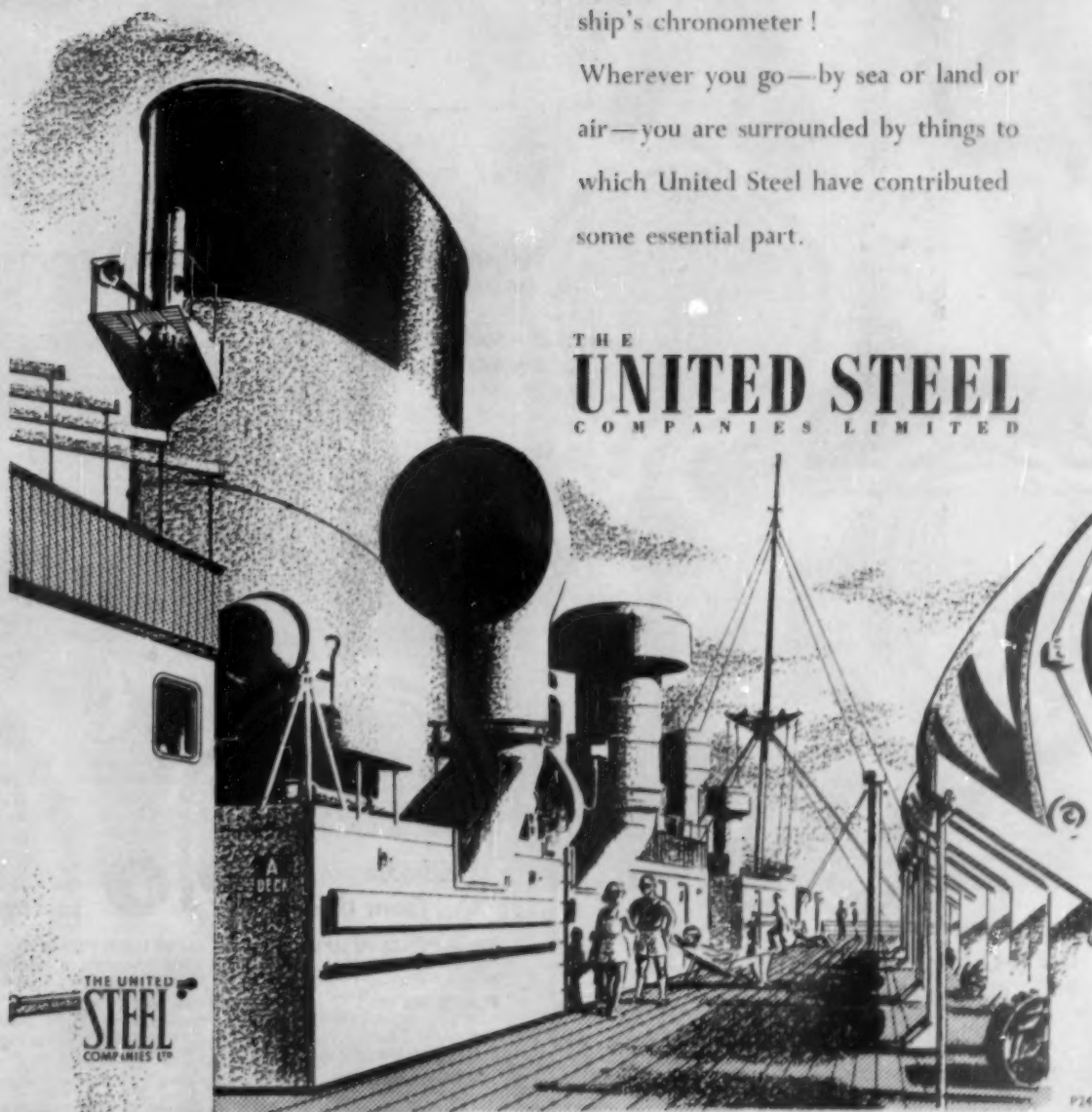
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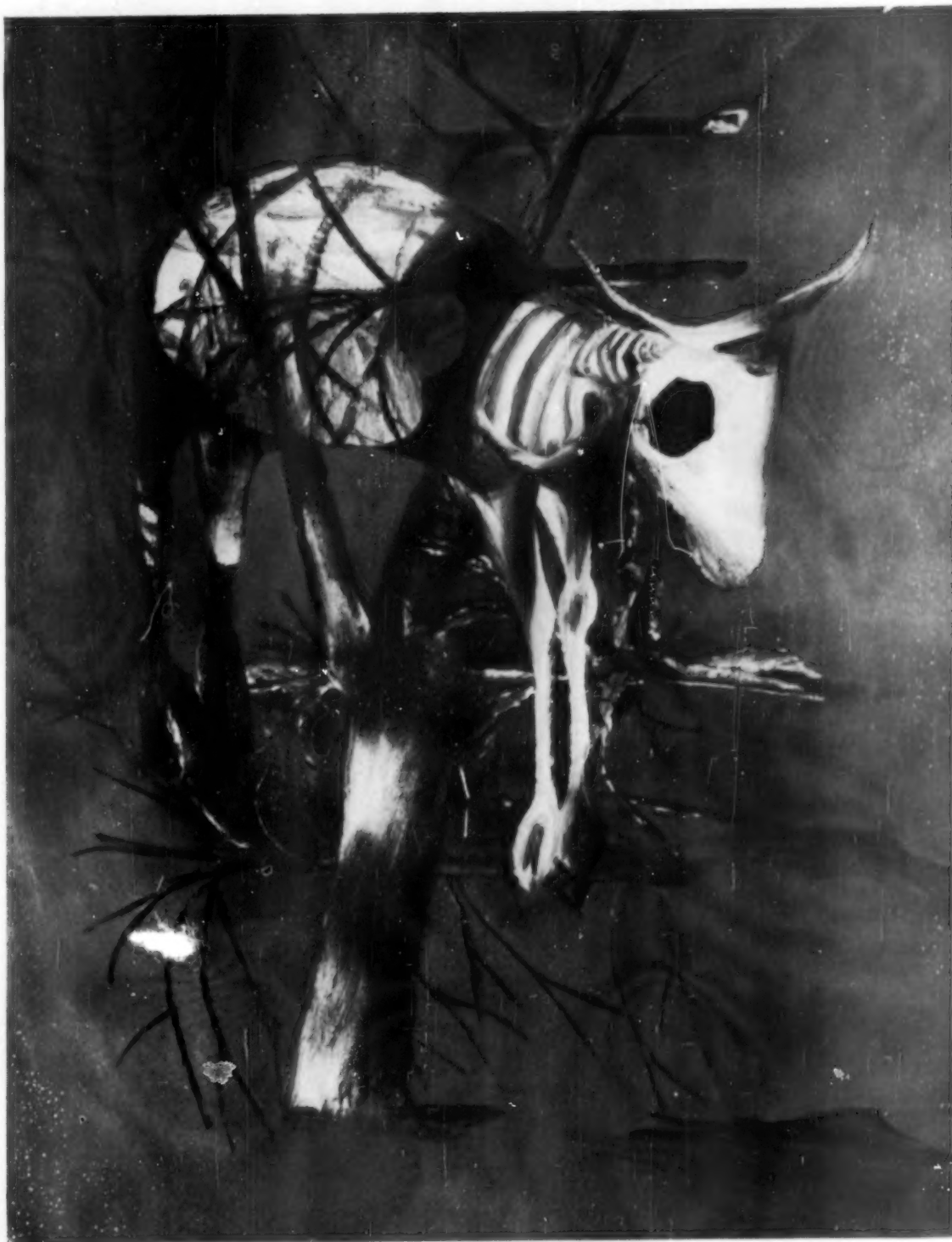
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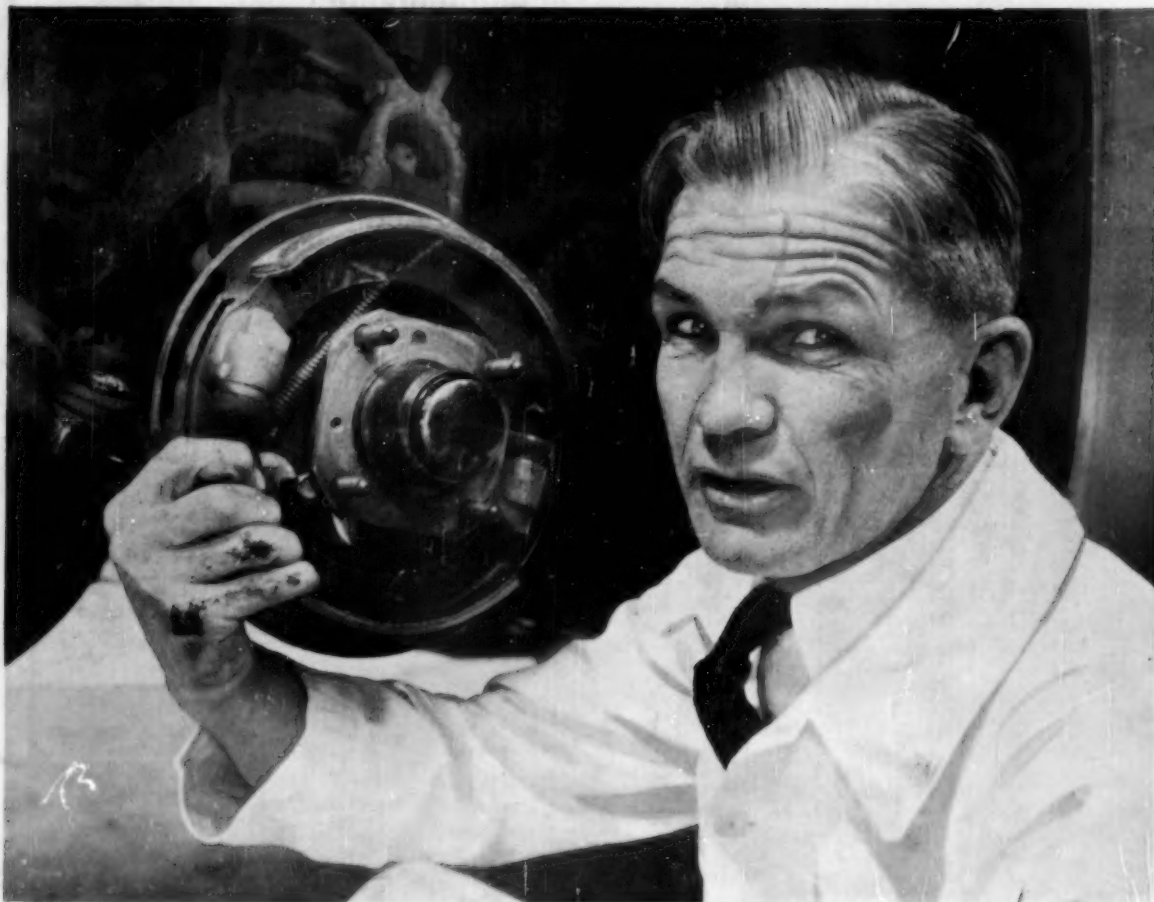
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